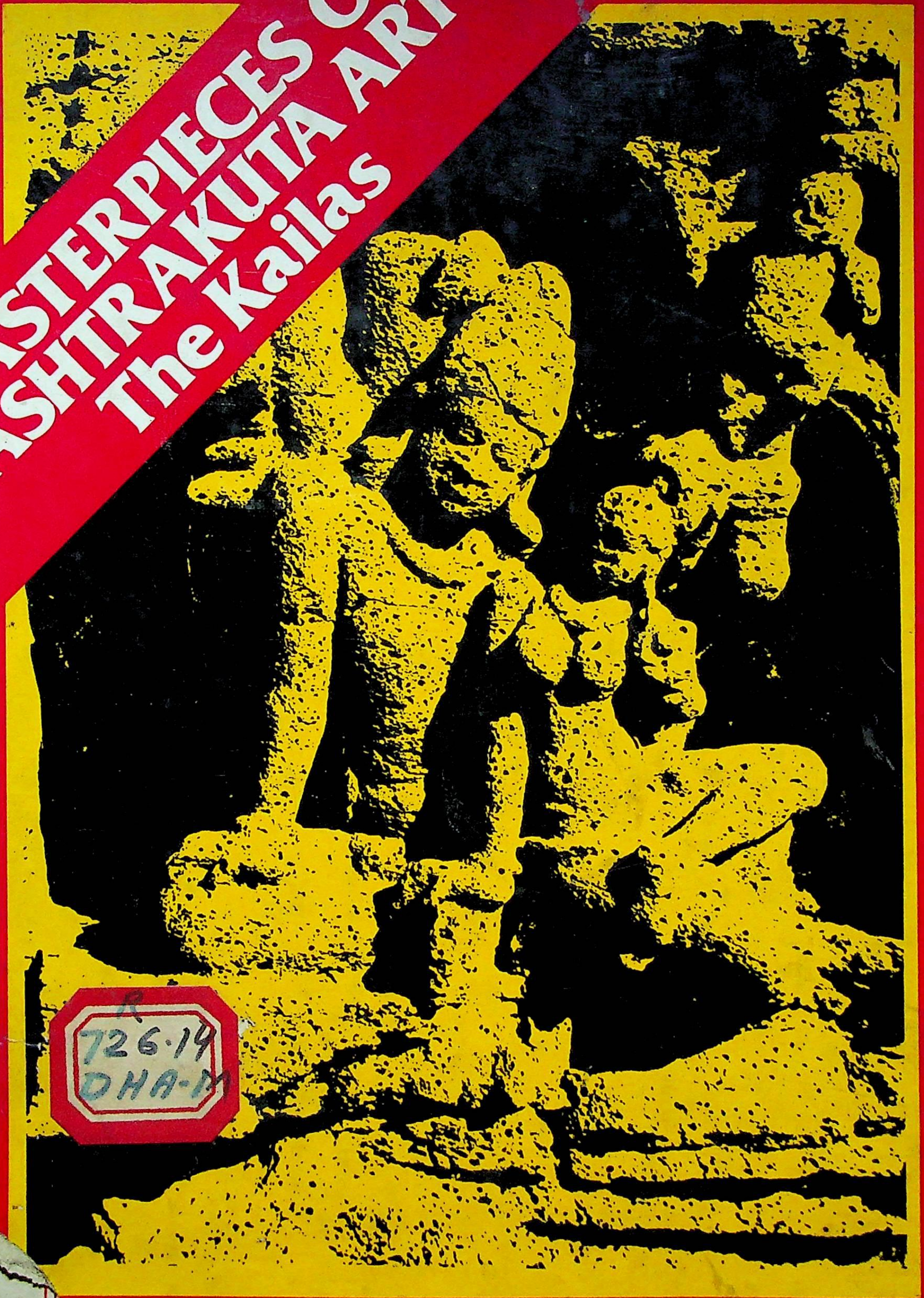
MASTERPIECES OF RASHTRAKUTA ART
The Kailas



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.K. Dhavalikar

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MASTERPIECES OF RASHTRAKUTA ART

Perhaps the only important surviving monument of the times of the mighty Rashtrakutas, redolent of their great plastic art, is the wonderful Kailas at Ellora, rightly described as an "Epic in Stone."

The Kailas is a unique temple, excavated completely from a solid hillside and is thus perhaps the greatest achievement of the Indian priest-architect and sculptor. Excavated in the 8th century A.D., under the patronage of king Krishna I, it is more a stupendous monolithic shrine rather than a mere cave-temple — a shrine dedicated to Shiva and His worship.

The author has dealt with every aspect of the architecture and art of the Kailas complex and of the Rashtrakutas who ordered it to be excavated. After a historical Introduction, Dr. Dhavalikar deals with the different architectural phases, the excavation of the Kailas in particular and has also dealt with the other adjoining shrines. A very interesting chapter is that on the Kailas in the medieval period.

The whole book is very readable by all interested in Indian culture, both Indian and foreign. The tourist to the Ellora group of caves will find it indispensable. But the author has not forgotten the serious student of Indian art and architecture. For him he has given many references and notes at the end of the book so as not to disturb the reading flow of the less knowledgeable reader. For him there is also an adequate Glossary of Technical Terms. The Select Bibliography will prove very useful for further study.

Of course, no book of this nature would be adequate unless well illustrated. There are therefore 84 superb plates of large size and some explanatory line drawings in the text. The plates will be a delight to the discerning eye for they illustrate the very best of the art of the Rashtrakudas in general and of the Kailas particularly in detail.

This is a book to own and read again and again, feasting the eyes on its many plates, for it will create in one a pride for India's great cultural heritage.

84 half-tone plates
7 line drawings

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गुरुकुल कांगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय

विषय .... आगत नं. 93758
लेखक Dhavalikar, M.K.
शीर्षक Masterpieces of Rashtrakuta art the Kailas

दिनांक	सदस्य संख्या	दिनांक	सदस्य संख्या

पुस्तकालय
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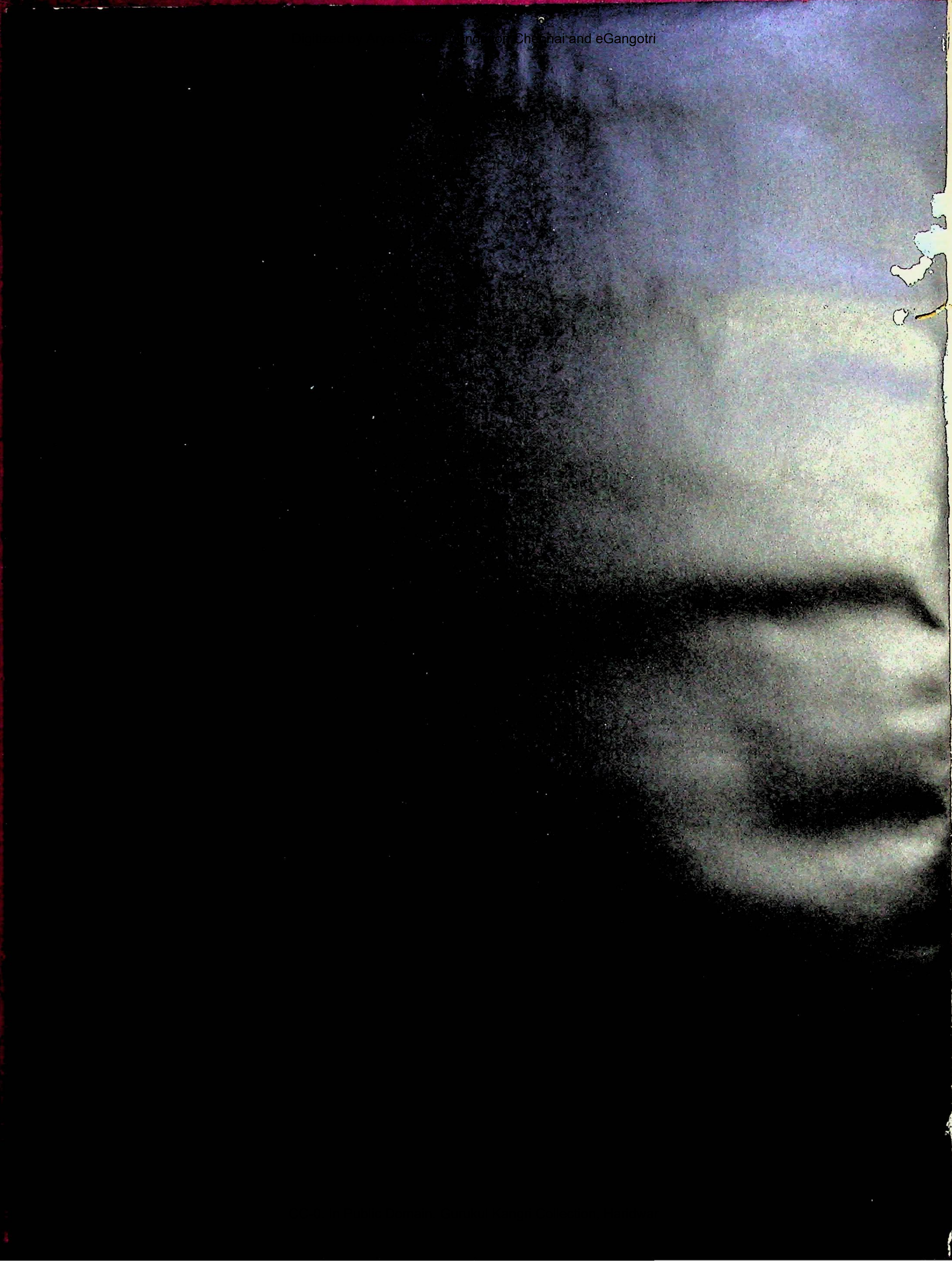

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MASTERPIECES OF RASHTRAKUTA ART
The Kailas

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MASTERPIECES OF RASHTRAKUTA ART

The Kailas

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PREFACE

The present monograph is a revised and much enlarged version of my paper entitled "Kailas — A study in Stylistic Development" which I read at the Seminar on "The Rashtrakutas" held at Bangalore in 1978. There is so much in Kailas that tomes can be written but I hope the present work, though small, touches all the aspects of that great edifice.

In preparing this monograph, I have received help from several individuals. I must record my gratitude to Prof. S.B. Deo, Director, Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, Poona for affording facilities for study and to Dr. Suresh Vasant, Research Associate, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA for stimulating discussion and many useful suggestions. Dr. Suresh also did excellent photography. Photo-printing was done by Sarvashri Vasant Nagpure and Sunil Jadhav while plans and other drawings were made by Sarvashri Yeshwant Rasar and Chandrakant Padwal. To all these technicians of the Department of Archaeology, Deccan College, my thanks are due. I must also thank Sarvashri Madhav Abhyankar and Nagesh Gaware for neatly typing the manuscript. I am grateful to Dr. R.J. Mehta of M/s. D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd., Bombay, who has been evincing keen interest in my work. I also thank Sri S.M. Murkar of M/s. Taraporevala for seeing the book through the press.

M.K. DHAVALIKAR

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Introduction

1

Of the 1200 odd rock-cut cave-temples in India, about 800 belong to the Buddhist faith, over 200 to the Hindu, and the remaining are the shrines of the Jainas. A vast majority of these monuments, over a thousand, are located in Western India, or more precisely in the State of Maharashtra, whereas the remaining are scattered in other parts of the country (Fig. 1). The concentration of these edifices in Maharashtra is due to the availability of the basaltic trap-rock in the Sahyadri ranges which is quite suitable for carving. At some places, however, as at Pitalkhora, a soft layer of red shale has destroyed the monument. Similarly at Kanheri the rock is extra-soft and hence the caves have been considerably eroded.

The rock-cut activity began in India, not in Western India, but in the north where the earliest caves were excavated in the Barabar Hills, about 25 km north of Gaya. They were ordered to be carved by Ashoka the Great (272-32 B.C.), the greatest of the Mauryan emperors, and his grandson Dasharatha for the Ajivikas, a sect of the Jainas. The activity then shifted to Western India in the second century B.C., when the cave temples at Bhaja and Pitalkhora were excavated. The Buddhist caves can be grouped into two classes: (i) the early caves belonging to the Hinayana faith which are datable to *circa* 2nd century B.C.-2nd century A.D.; and (ii) the later caves belonging to the Mahayana faith datable to *circa* 5th-6th centuries A.D. The former are characterised by the absence of the Buddha image and the worship was symbolic; the stupa, the empty throne, the Bodhi tree, Buddha's sandals, etc., were worshipped. The latter group is distinguished by the presence of the Buddha image. The Buddhist caves are of two types. The *Chaitya* or the prayer-hall containing a stupa, and *vihara* which consisted of a quadrangular hall with rooms on all sides except on the front. The latter was used for the residence of monks. The Mahayana *viharas*, as at Ajanta, also have a shrine in the back wall containing a Buddha image. The most notable examples of the Hinayana caves are to be found at Bhaja, Pitalkhora, Karla, and Nasik while the finest examples of Mahayana caves are at Ajanta, Aurangabad, and Ellora.

The Hindu rock-cut activity began in the late fifth or early sixth century A.D. at Jogeshwari in Bombay and on the nearby island of Elephanta, but later shifted to Ellora where it reached its zenith in Cave XVI, the Kailas, in the 8th century A.D. The Jainas then appear on the scene and their finest rock-cut shrines are to be seen at Ellora itself in Cave Nos. XXX - XXXVI which belong to the 9th century A.D. Thus, after flourishing for over a thousand years this art idiom lost its popularity in the 10th century A.D., probably because structural temples then came to be built. They obviously must have been easier and cheaper to construct. However, the rock architecture continued to be patronized till the 12th and 13th century as the recent discovery of a group of large number of caves at Panhale-Kazi in Ratnagiri district indicates. But with the advent of the Muslims in the 13th century A.D., the entire architectural activity in Maharashtra came, as it were, to a grinding halt.

The Kailas cannot strictly be classed as a cave-temple; it can better be described as a monolithic shrine. It is almost an exact copy of the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal (Dist. Bijapur, Karnatak), but is almost twice in size. It was carved under the patronage of king Krishna I (A.D 757-772), the second Rashtrakuta monarch. This has been clearly stated in the Baroda copper plate grant of king Karka II of the Gujarat branch of the Rashtrakutas which is dated to Saka 734 (A.D. 812-13). It was issued from a place called Siddhashami, and was found while digging for the foundations of a house belonging to one Beni Ram at Baroda (1).

The grant records an extremely interesting story about the Kailas at Ellora. It tells us that Dantidurga, the first Rashtrakuta king, was

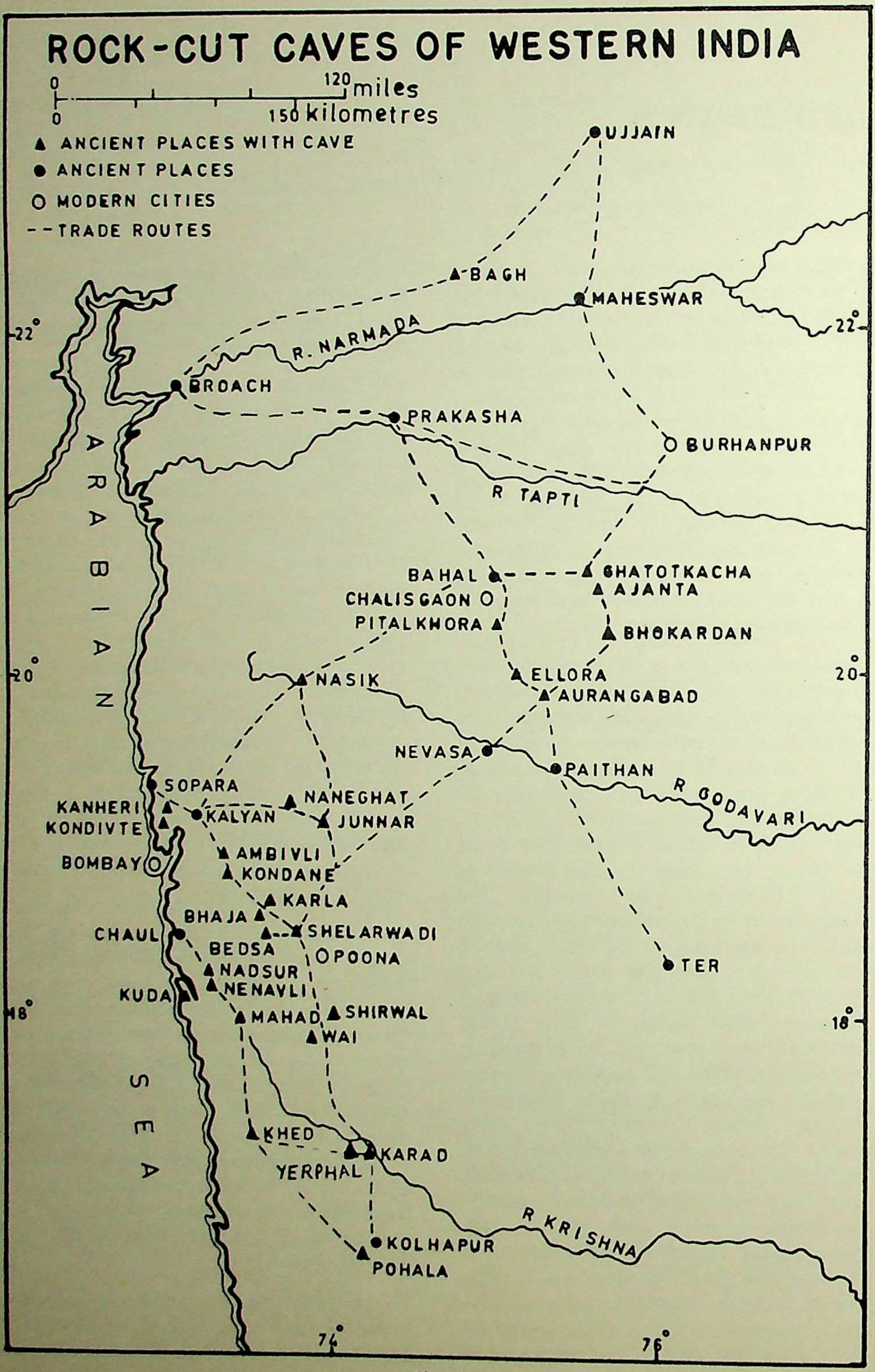
ROCK-CUT CAVES OF WESTERN INDIA
0
120 miles
0
150 kilometres
▲ ANCIENT PLACES WITH CAVE
● ANCIENT PLACES
○ MODERN CITIES
- - TRADE ROUTES
UJJAIN
BAGH
MAHESWAR
22°
R. NARMADA
BROACH
PRAKASHA
BURHANPUR
ARABIAN SEA
R TAPTI
BAHAL
GHATOTKACHA
AJANTA
CHALISGAON
PITALKHORA
BHOKARDAN
20°
NASIK
ELLORA
AURANGABAD
NEVASA
PAITHAN
R GODAVARI
SOPARA
KANHERI
KONDIVTE
KALYAN
NANEGHAT
JUNNAR
AMBIVLI
BOMBAY
KONDANE
KARLA
BHAJA
CHAUL
SHELARWADI
BEDSA
POONA
NADSUR
NENAVLI
KUDA
TER
18°
MAHAD
SHIRWAL
WAI
KHED
KARAD
YERPHAL
R KRISHNA
KOLHAPUR
POHALA
74°
76°

Fig. 1

ousted by his uncle Krishna I, the patron of Kailas, who then crowned himself as king. Krishna's conflict with the Chalukyas has been alluded to; he is said to have turned into deer and put to flight the *Mahavaraha* or the great boar, i.e., the Chalukya king, for the boar was the royal emblem of the Chalukyas (2). He established himself at the hill fort of Elapura, which settlement has been compared to the abode of god Siva. Elapura has been referred to as *Sannivesha* or encampment and it was therefore not the capital city but the temporary headquarters of the king. Lines 10-18 of the record refer to the rock-temple of the Kailas. The poet describes: "Having seen his wonderful encampment situated on the mountain of Elapura, the astonished immortals (gods), who travel in celestial cars, always take much thought saying: 'This is the abode of *Svayambhu* Siva, and no artificially made dwelling. Sri, if she could be seen, would be like this.' Verily even the architect who built it felt astonishment saying, 'The utmost perseverance would fail to accomplish such a work again. Oh, how has it been achieved by me.' By means of it, Shambhu, who made his abode there, though already decorated with such wonderful ornaments as the torrent of the Ganga and the rays of the moon and the Kalakuta poison was still further decorated with rubies and gold and all other wealth." This fact that the temple was caused to be carved by a king of Elapura, survived in a mediaeval legend. In the *Verul Sivalaya Mahatmya,* dated A.D. 1780, we have a very interesting account of the temple (3).

The Kailas is numbered as Cave XVI in the cave-complex at Ellora that is situated about 25 km north-west of Aurangabad. The caves are about 1 km from the village of Verul after which they have been named. The village is a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus as it contains the temple of Ghrishneshwar, which is one of the twelve sacred Jyotirlingas—Saivite shrines—in India. The Jyotirlinga is supposed to have a hoary antiquity, but the present temple is said to have been built by Ahilyadevi (A.D. 1725-1795), a princess of the Holkar family of the former state of Indore in central India. She was a pious lady who built and renovated a large number of temples in central India and the Deccan.

The Ellora Caves are carved in one of the ranges of the Sahyadris. It is a low hill which runs north-south to a distance of 2 km. The location of the caves, however, is not as picturesque as that of Ajanta, for here there is no river or stream or valley. On the other hand, the hill in which the caves are carved stands on a dusty plain that presents a semi-arid look and there is not much of greenery all the year round save during the monsoon from June to October, when because of the rains, we see a green carpet all around.

The Rashtrakutas were one of the most important rulers of ancient India in the post-Gupta period and they had conquered at one time or other the Ganga valley in the north and also the peninsular region in the south. They ruled for over two centuries (A.D. 753-967), but there is adequate epigraphical evidence to show that the Rashtrakutas were ruling in Maharashtra even earlier than the 5th century A.D. (4). Their early history, however, is shrouded in mystery and they do not seem to have played any decisive role in the Deccan between the 5th to the 8th century A.D. But their history from the 8th - 10th centuries can be succinctly written on the basis of a large number of epigraphical records. As said before, the founder of the family was one Dantidurga (A.D. 753-57) who ruled for a very short period of four years, but within that brief span he established the supremacy of the dynasty in the Deccan. One of his inscriptions is carved at Ellora itself in Cave XV (known as Dashavatara) which, along with other records, clearly establishes that he had conquered territories between the Narmada and the Tungabhadra rivers, and proclaimed his sovereignty by defeating the formidable Chalukyas of Badami, who were then the unchallenged rulers of the Deccan.

The second monarch of the Rashtrakuta dynasty was Krishna I with whom we are concerned more because he was the builder of the Kailas. Although he ruled for only fifteen years from A.D. 757-772, his achievements are many. His predecessor, Dantidurga, had completely vanquished the Chalukyas of Badami by defeating Kirtivarman II in A.D. 752 or 753, and had annexed their territories to his kingdom(5). His uncle Krishna I was also probably associated with the expedition. It was this resounding victory which must have led to the excavation of the Kailas. He is also credited with the conquest of the Konkan, the coastal region of Western India. His most noteworthy contribution was the consolidation of the vast empire stretching between the Narmada in the north and the Tungabhadra in the south, much of which had already been conquered by Dantidurga, his predecessor.

Krishna I was succeeded by a number of able kings but their reigns are all characterised by constant wars with their contemporaries, more particularly with the Pratiharas of the north and the Palas who were then ruling in eastern India. Dhruva (A.D. 780-793) defeated the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Rajasthan and the Gangas of the eastern Deccan. His successor, Govinda III (A.D. 794-814) was perhaps the greatest of the Rashtrakuta monarchs, for he inflicted crushing defeats on most of his powerful rivals which brought him rich tributes. The river-goddess shrine in the Kailas complex, containing the images of Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati, was probably carved under his patronage to celebrate his victories in northern India. He also defeated Nagbhata II, the Pratihara king, about A.D. 800. This perhaps explains the Pratihara influence on the river-goddess sculptures.

Amoghavarsha (A.D. 814-878) ruled for a long period of about sixty-four years and from the records of his period it appears that it was rather difficult for him to preserve the empire intact. After him, several kings of the dynasty ruled for about a century, till A.D. 967, when the Rashtrakuta rule came to an end.

The Rashtrakutas were undoubtedly a formidable power in early mediaeval India, but they could not contribute much, save the Kailas, to the cultural pattern. This was solely because they were constantly engaged in conflicts with the Pratiharas and the Palas and the early mediaeval history of India is nothing but the tripartite struggle between these three ruling houses. The Kailas stands as the solitary mute testimony to their glory. A hundred temples and sundry art pieces could not have added much to their achievements, but one Kailas, which is a veritable epic in stone, speaks volumes about the might of the dynasty. Everything they did was on an epic scale; their battles, their architecture, sculpture and painting. The sky-kissing finials of Kailas seem to compete, as it were, with the eagle which was the royal emblem of the Rashtrakutas. Their sculpture in the Kailas too is of gigantic proportions. Their paintings here depict the bloody battles they fought so violently with the Pratiharas. The only other site where one can get a faint idea of this megalomania of the Rashtrakutas is Kandhar (Dist. Nanded, Maharashtra), which was once their ancient capital. It is strewn with fragments of giant statues, but the whole site unfortunately is in ruins, waiting only for the spade of the archaeologist. All this shows that the Rashtrakulas were staunch worshippers of Siva and great patrons of the Puranic religion.

Architectural Phases

2

The Kailas complex consists of a number of monuments, besides the main shrine which is popularly known as Kailas or Rangamahal (Figs. 2, 3). The Kailas itself has five subsidiary shrines around the sanctum sanctorum (*garbha-griha*) in the circumambulatory path (*pradakshina-patha),* besides the *Nandi-mandapa* and the *gopura* entrance which too form part of the main shrine. But there are also other shrines, such as the river-goddess shrine in the north court, the Yajna-shala and the Paralanka in the southern rock face, the gallery around the *garbha-griha* of the Kailas, and the Lankeshwar. All these shrines and the Kailas proper were obviously not excavated at one and the same time; they appear to belong to different periods as is evident from their stylistic peculiarities. But according to some scholars even the main temple as a whole was not carved out at one and the same time and they are of the opinion that its different components were excavated at different times. It is therefore necessary to study the various architectural phases of the Kailas complex and place them on a proper chronological footing. It may also be stated that although there is definitive epigraphical evidence furnished by the Baroda copper plate grant of king Karka II which records that the Kailas was executed under the patronage of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna I (A.D. 757-772), there appears to be a general opinion that such a gigantic edifice could not possibly have been conceived and completed during the short reign of a single monarch and consequently it is thought that the architectural activity at the site went on for a long time. James Fergusson and Jas. Burgess, the pioneers of the study of cave-temple architecture of Western India, were the first to observe: "It is indeed difficult to understand how so vast a work as the Kailasa, with its surroundings, could have been completed in less time with limited mechanical means available at that age. Even allowing all the time this would imply and granting that all the superfluous wealth of the Rathor (Rashtrakuta) prince was placed at the disposal of the Brahmanas, to commemorate their triumph over the Buddhists, the Kailasa must always remain a miracle of patient industry applied to well defined purpose. It far exceeds, both in extent and in elaboration, any other rock cut temples in India, and is and must always be considered as one of the most remarkable monuments that adorn a land so fertile in examples of patient industry and of the pious devotedness of the people to the service of their gods"(1).

This was also the presumption with which Hermann Goetz commenced his study (2). He stated, "The Kailasa is generally dated into the middle of the 8th century approximately, on the evidence of reference in inscriptions of the Rashtrakuta dynasty which attribute its erection to Krishnaraja I (757-72). However, on a closer inspection the problem appears not so simple. The Kailasa is not a homogenous building erected under one ruler. Its very size alone excludes the possibility of its having been excavated and sculptured within the fifteen years of Krishnaraja's reign. For the narrowness of space and the technical resources then available had to keep in bounds even the ambitions of such a strong ruler"(3).

In his masterly analysis of the various components of the Kailas Goetz has traced its development through eight distinctive architectural phases, spanning the reigns of seven Rashtrakuta and one Pratihara kings, ranging in time from the 8th to the 13th centuries A.D. It is nearly a quarter of a century since Goetz published his exhaustive study, but no dissident voice has so far been heard, and we may therefore safely conclude that his verdict has generally been accepted as final. However, a careful analysis of the different architectural motifs and sculptural styles would lead one to question Goetz's far reaching conclusions.

Doris Chatham has recently attempted to analyse the various components of the Kailas complex and has built up a sequence for them. She observes, "If the temple had been planned before the start of any excavation at the site, then we might imagine that, as has often been assumed, after trenches had been carved into the hill to isolate a great block of stone, the rest of the carving was entirely from the top, down. If, however, the plan for the temple had not been conceived before excavation began, and there are parts of the cave which are substantially earlier than the Kailas temple, we should expect to find them not at the top, but at the front, or western end of the excavation. If one considers the process of excavating a hill, one must realise that it is not a simple reversal of the construction technique of building from ground up. At Ellora, it was primarily a process of burrowing in from the front"(4).

Doris Chatham has divided the development of the Kailas into five architectural phases. According to her, the work began first in the side walls of the huge trench in which the central block for the temple was isolated. She, therefore, includes in the first phase, the unfinished cave above the river-goddess shrine and the caves in the south side of the excavation as also the upper part of the front screen wall including the 'Cave' with the Mahalakshmi panel. This first phase has been dated by her to the Kalachuri period in *c.* 625 A.D. In the second phase the main temple with the subsidiary shrines in the *pradakshina-patha* (circumambulatory path) were executed about A.D.740 under the patronage of the Western Chalukyas. In the third phase, the sculptures on the screen wall, the river-goddess shrine, the elephants and the victory pillars, the *Nandi-mandapa* and the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* panels were executed under the patronage of Dantidurga about A.D. 753-757. The fourth phase belongs to the time of Krishna I (A.D. 757-772) when the *shikhara* and plinth of the Kailas, some major sculptures, the Lankeshwar, and the Yajna-shala were carved out. Finally, the galleries at the back and the *Nandi-mandapa* were completed under Dhruva (A.D. 773-97).

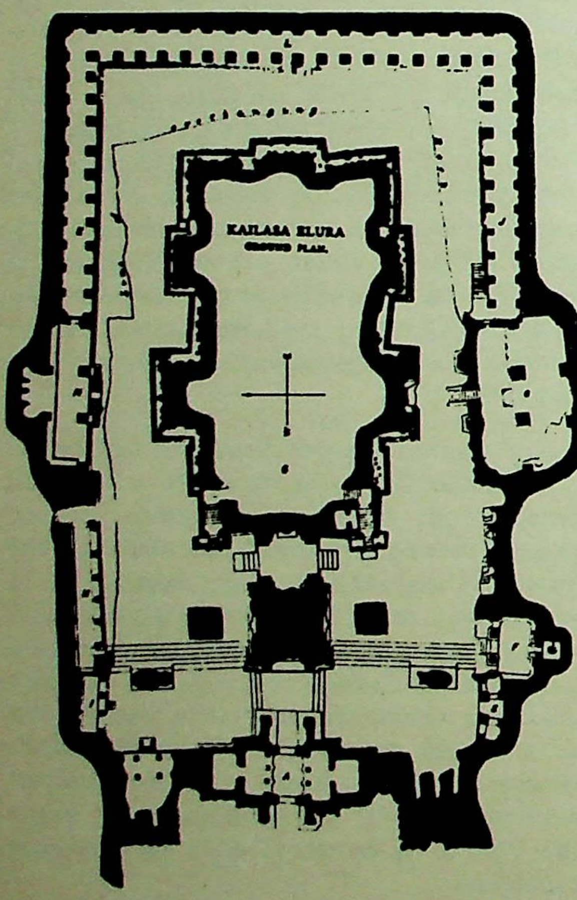

Fig. 2

This in brief is the scheme of architectural phases outlined by Doris Chatham. It is hard to agree with her because she has presumed that the edifice was not well-conceived before the work began at the site. However, as will be discussed later, it is clear that the edifice was well-conceived before the work started and Chatham's scheme of development of the monument is therefore not tenable.

THE TEMPLE (Figs. 3, 4)

Before analysing the architectural motifs and sculptural styles it is better to describe the temple first. The temple proper has a most imposing front that consists of a storied entrance gateway of the *gopura* type in the enclosure wall, having niches divided by pilasters. They contain images of several divinities and among them are included the *ashta-dikpalas,* Siva Nataraja, Narsimha, Trivikrama, Vishnu as Varaha, Vishnu with Garuda, Brahma, etc., all of gigantic proportions (Pl. 1). The entrance doorway is flanked by river-goddesses Ganga and Yamuna. Nearby are *naga*

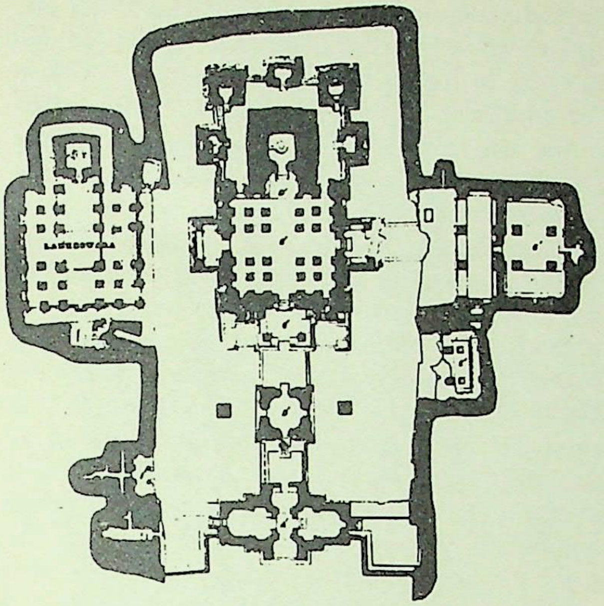

Fig. 3

(cobra) king and his queen (Pl. 2) and at the base are rows of elephants, lions, and *vyalas* (mythical animals).

On entering through the gateway, we find rooms on either side, on a slightly higher level. The front door is flanked by Shankhanidhi and Padmanidhi, the guardians of wealth. Facing the entrance is a huge panel of Gajalakshmi (Pl. 10), who is shown sitting on a lotus and is being bathed by elephants.

In the open court on either side are free standing life-size elephants carved in the living rock. On the left wall of the *gopura* are carved panels depicting Mahishamardini (Pl. 6), Krishna lifting Govardhana, and Kama, the god of love, and his consort Rati (Pl.7). Of these, the Mahishamardini panel is noteworthy because the buffalo-demon shown in it is in human form and recalls to the mind that at Mahabalipuram.

The temple (Pl. 21) has the typical Dravida *shikhara* (tower) and is almost an imitation of the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal. The edifice stands on an inordinately high plinth on which are carved life-size elephants and lions. On either side of the temple proper steps have been provided for going up to the shrine. Around the *garbha-griha* is a small *antarala* to which is joined a large *sabha-mandapa,* which can be described as the *navaranga-mandapa* because of the four sets of four pillars which divide it into nine squarish compartments. It has *ardha-mandapas* on the sides and an *agra-mandapa* at the front. The *Nandi-mandapa* is carved between the *gopura* and the *agra-mandapa* of the shrine, and all the three parts are joined by a sort of rock-cut bridge. On either side of the *Nandi-mandapa* are huge monolithic pillars, about 17 m high. They are similar to the pilasters inside the *sabha-mandapa* and were once crowned by tridents. The entire edifice is of the *tritala*-type — the three-storied variety of the Dravidian order.

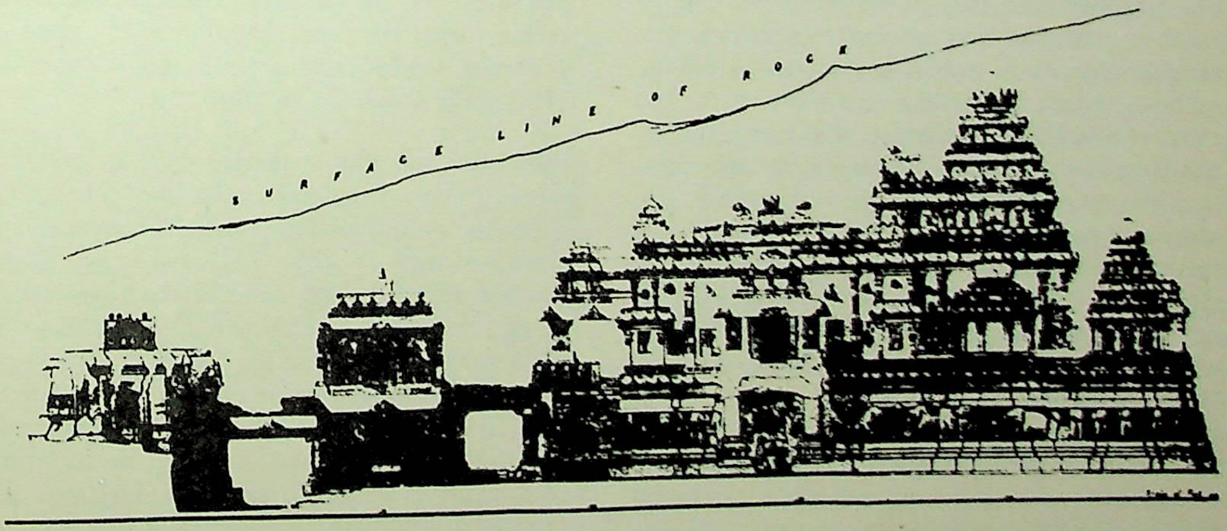

Fig. 4

It will be clear from the above description that the edifice was carefully planned in all respects and then executed accordingly. There can be little doubt that the subsidiary shrines in the scarp on either side and the gallery at the back resembling a cloister are decidedly later additions and we shall discuss later how late they are. So far as the main temple is concerned, its planning and even its execution need not have taken an inordinately long period, for the shrine, as is known to every student of Indian art and architecture, is an almost exact replica of the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal (Fig. 5), which in its turn is constructed with the Kailasanath temple at Kanchipuram (Conjeevaram) as its prototype(5). As a matter of fact, the three shrines built by different kings and situated so distantly from one another, share so many elements in common that there are hardly any other structures which are so similar to one another. But at the same time, they also have significant differences in the matter of detail for the Kailas is more than twice the size of Virupaksha. All the same, in the case of the Kailas the artists were translating a structural temple into living rock. One cannot help being amazed at the massive volume of the shrine. But once conceived, the task of excavation may not have been as difficult as one might think considering the expertise in rock-cutting available in those days. Rock-cut art has been a distinguishing quality of the artisans of Maharashtra for centuries and Walter M. Spink has described how they moved from one site to another, wherever and whenever patronage was available(6). They could accomplish the task without much difficulty or delay with the assistance of those very artists who had just then constructed the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal. In this connection, Benjamin Rowland Jr's observations are pertinent. He states, "Although we may marvel at the amount of labour that went into such a gigantic carving, it should be pointed out that there was probably less expenditure of work in literally quarrying the entire complex from the mountainside than would have been required for transporting the cut stones necessary to build it"(7). Here, the stone-masons had to start from the top and for this they selected a spot in the rocky hill with the proper configuration. First, they had to dig three large trenches, measuring approximately two each of (90 × 17 × 33 m) and one of (50 × 10 × 33 m) respectively, in the hill in order to isolate a rectangular mass of rock in the middle(8). But considering the configuration of the rock mass, it is only in half the area that the trenches had to be so deep. On a fair calculation we can estimate that roughly one and one-half to two million cft. of rock was excavated. If one person is taken to cut about 4 cft. of rock per day, 250 labourers could be said to have taken about five and half years to dig these trenches and isolate the mass of rock in the middle where the artists in stone did the carving. Of course, the carving started right from the beginning as soon as sufficient rock surface was available for the purpose, "for each portion of the carved detail appears to have been completely finished as the work progressed downwards, thus avoiding any need for scaffolding"(9). Of the temple proper, the *shikhara* was the first to be completed and not the gateway as Goetz would have us believe (10). After this the work would commence from the top to the bottom, from the upper storey to the lower storey and from the front to the interior, and even within the shrine proper, from the ceiling to the floor. Simultaneously the work of carving the pilasters, the ornamentation on the pillars and other areas was also undertaken. The whole work therefore probably did not take more than ten to twelve years to complete. This is of course hypothetical, but is none the less plausible, and the main purpose here is to demonstrate that it was not impossible for the artisans to execute the Kailas temple within the short duration of the reign of Krishna I. It now remains to be seen whether the artists really achieved their objective.

The entire monolithic temple with its entrance gateway, the *Nandi-mandapa,* the courts, the elephants in the courts and also the victory pillars (*dhvaja-stambhas*) (Pl. 12), were no doubt planned originally and none of them appears to be an after-thought, although Goetz thinks that some of these were added later(11). We shall, therefore, examine the architectural evidence to find out whether it was at all possible to make such additions once the main temple had been carved out or at least after its upper storey had been excavated. First and foremost among these are the victory pillars (*dhvaja-stambhas*) which,

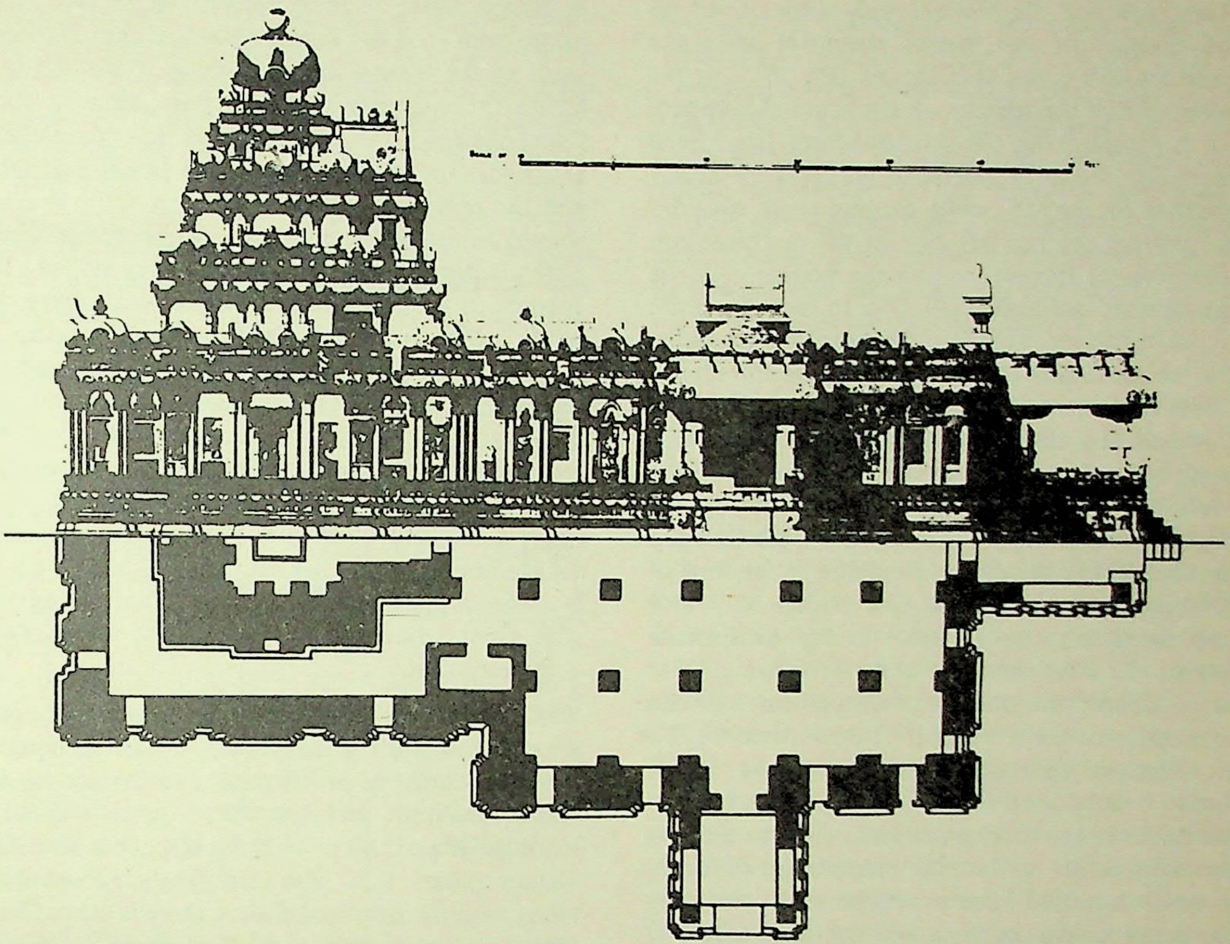

Fig. 5

according to Goetz, were carved out in the second architectural phase. But this appears to be impossible for the simple reason that they are not structural but monolithic, and hence could not have been added later; on the other hand, when the long trenches on the north and south of the main temple were being dug out, the area of these monoliths must have been left out. They must, therefore, have been in the original plan or else they could not have been executed later. Once the rock mass for the monoliths was isolated on both sides, the carving on them was undertaken. Stylistically these victory pillars are akin to the pilasters carved on the exterior of the temple.

In Goetz's scheme of architectural phases of the Kailas, the lion and elephant frieze on the lower plinth of the temple was carved under the Paramara king Bhoja of Dhara, A.D. 1000-1065(12). Although we agree that the temple was carved from the top downwards, and hence the plinth must naturally have been the last to be carved, this is indeed a bold statement. It implies that the temple's plinth was plain and undecorated for two hundred years, from the middle of 8th century onwards(13). But the massive plinth with a number of offsets appears to have been reserved for carving the elephant-lion frieze in the original plan for the temple and it would not have been possible to execute it after two centuries. The frieze seen sideways shows that the animals have been carved in bold relief; nay they are almost free-standing and project out considerably. Unless this was originally intended, the plinth would not project out to such an extent. Moreover, there is convincing evidence to show that the episodes from the

Ramayana and the *Mahabharata* were carved on the exterior of the temple basement after the elephant-lion frieze was carved (Pl. 24). On the outer wall of the temple, on the north side, where some scenes from the *Mahabharata* have been carved on the lofty basement, we can very clearly see that the artists, while carving these episodes did not disturb the left paw of the mythical lion (*shardula*) at the corner and the figures near the creature are unfinished (Pl. 27). In fact, the entire figure of this standing *shardula* is seen to protrude. On the south side too we find that the *Ramayana* scenes in the lower register end near the tail of the *shardula*. It is necessary to state in this connection that, according to Goetz, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* panels were executed during the reign of Krishna I(14). Consequently, the lion and elephant frieze has also to be dated to the time of Krishna I. Moreover, the epic panels must also have been inspired by those in the Virupaksha temple. The manner and style of carving these panels at both the sites are so similar that they can be taken to be the work of the same artists(15). The inordinately high plinth on which the Kailas stands is not found in the Virupaksha temple. In the Kailas it was more an expedient because it was necessary to lift up the whole temple out of the pit in which it would have otherwise sunk, and only elephants would have served the purpose. The Rashtrakuta artists were certainly not ignorant of the *gajathara* (row of elephants) motif, and the nearest at hand was that at Pitalkhora which, however, was already a thousand years old (16). And for the Chalukyan artists, it was simply a matter of magnification for even in the Virupaksha temple elephants and lions have been carved, but on a much smaller scale (17). Similarly, the free-standing elephant statues in the front courts on either side of the entrance were also in the original plan but Goetz is of the opinion that they were carved in the first phase which he assigns to the reign of Dantidurga(18).

ENTRANCE GATEWAY

There can be little doubt that the entrance gateway to the Kailas was also being carved out when the work on the principal shrine was under way. It is not an isolated structure but forms a part of the edifice to which it is connected by the *Nandi-mandapa*. Since its upper storey is in line with the upper storey of the *Nandi-mandapa* that further leads to the frontal *agra-mandapa* of the shrine, Goetz thought that only this part, that is, the upper storey of the gateway, was first completed along with the upper storeys of the *Nandi-mandapa* and the *agra-mandapa* of the temple(19). But it should be borne in mind that the entire edifice virtually does not have an upper storey as such; it appears to have one because of the high massive plinth which was a necessity or else the temple would have sunk down considerably and consequently would not have been visible from a distance. This in itself would show that such a high plinth was already thought of in preparing the original plan of the temple. Moreover, the upper storey of the entrance gateway (*gopura*) has a *kakshasana* (stone bench) at the front and no entrance is provided. It is therefore hard to agree with Goetz that the so-called upper storey was completed first.

The upper storey of the entrance gateway was thus an expedient for the sake of alignment. Although it was intended as an entrance, we do not think that it was quite common even in ancient times; since the lower courts with the elephants and the victory pillars were also completely carved out along with the principal shrine, there is every likelihood of the entrance having been provided from the "lower storey" of the gateway. Obviously, therefore, it was also executed along with its upper part. We are hence of the opinion that this entrance gateway with its upper and lower storeys was completed under Krishna I. Goetz too is of the same opinion, but according to him the work under Krishnaraja constitutes the second phase of activity at the Kailas since the carving had begun first under Dantidurga(20).

The foregoing analysis of the architectural peculiarities of the Kailas, that is, the main shrine with its plinth, the entrance gateway, the *Nandi-mandapa*, the interior courts with the elephants, and the victory pillars, leads us to infer safely that the temple and all its architectural adjuncts were pre-planned as a coherent whole and were also executed accordingly in all probability under the patronage of Krishna I of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. We have also seen that the temple, though stupendous and most extensive of its kind, could have been carved out during the short span of about ten years. We would therefore be justified if we credit it to Krishna I as the Baroda copper plate grant, though of a later date, tells us(21). It is hard to believe that Dantidurga had any share in the creation of the Kailas for he was fighting battles with his hostile contemporaries all his life; he did not even have enough time at his disposal to incise the inscription on the *Nandi-mandapa* of the Dashavatara Cave No. 15 at Ellora. On the other hand, Krishna I was a mature man of forty-five when he succeeded his nephew in A.D. 756 or 757, and the final defeat of Kirtivarman, the Chalukyan monarch of Badami, was the achievement of Krishna I notwithstanding the fact that the expedition was planned and even carried out by Dantidurga(22). After the final victory, only he, who must have been impressed by the newly constructed Virupaksha temple in the Chalukyan territory, could have brought the Chalukyan architects and sculptors as war prizes to Ellora and entrusted the work to them. Among these artists there must have been some from the Pallava court because, as the Virupaksha temple inscription records, they were brought there by Kirtivarman himself after his conquest of the Pallavas of Kanchi(23).

SCULPTURE

The stylistic evidence of the sculptural art in the Kailas also furnishes corroborative evidence. The enormous wealth of sculpture that is carved on the exterior of the temple and its adjuncts is divisible, at least stylistically, into the following two broad categories:

(i) Sculptures which were carved in the area especially reserved for them, as for example, the Gajalakshmi panel at the entrance.
(ii) Sculptures carved in order to fill in vacant spaces.

There are, however, only a few sculptures in the former category. They are vast compositions which must have been thought of when the entire complex was conceived and obviously they are contemporary with the temple proper. Among these are the panels depicting Gajalakshmi flanked by elephants bathing her that is carved near the entrance, the Andhakasura-vadha-murti and Siva as Mahayogi in the *Nandi-mandapa*. These compositions are gigantic in size and are closely related to those in the upper floor of the Dashavatara Cave No. 15 at Ellora. They are characterised by massive forms and tremendous vitality and because of their apparent outburst of energy, they almost appear to be stepping out of their frames. Their powerful representations on such a colossal scale have no parallels in Indian art. They share all the characteristic traits of the Rashtrakuta style.

Some of the sculptures, however, are stylistically of a different category. Thus, the Markandeya-nugraha-murti of Siva carved on the west face of the north staircase in the Kailas (Pl. 34) is interesting from the stylistic point of view. It has an exact parallel in the Dashavatara Cave. Superficially at least both of them have many points of similarity, but the one in the Dashavatara, which is much larger, is characterised by tremendous force and vitality, a distinguishing feature of Rashtrakuta sculpture. It shows Siva springing out of the *linga* to the rescue of his worshipper — Markandeya — from Yama. The representation in the Kailas, however, is static and almost lifeless; even the god of death, Yama, is shown in a supplicant's attitude. The relatively slender human forms and the tall conical headdress of Siva are rather in the Chalukyan tradition. One somehow feels that we have here a Chalukyan sculptor who was asked to copy an earlier Rashtrakuta panel. The same holds good in the case of standing Lakulisha on the south wall of the Kailas which has its counterpart in the Mallikarjuna temple at Pattadkal.

There are a number of panels in the Kailas complex which do not stylistically conform to the Rashtrakuta idiom, but belong more to the Chalukyan school. This obviously is due to the presence of Chalukyan artists at Ellora since the edifice itself, as is known, was being carved out on a Chalukyan prototype. In fact, some of the themes from the latter are to be met with also in the Kailas. The narrative sculptures depicting episodes from the epics are present at both places; they are carved in narrow running bands(24). But there are larger panels such as those depicting the fight between Vali and Sugriva, Jatayu attacking Ravana for abducting Sita (Pl.40), both of which have been carved on the south wall at both the places(25). Similarly, the Varaha incarnation of Vishnu in the Kailas and that in the Virupaksha temple have many common features(26). Also comparable is the Lingodbhava-murti (Pl. 36) at both the sites(27). The figures of Kamadeva and Rati from the Kailas are not far removed from a couple in the Papanatha temple at Pattadkal(28). The Narasimha panel has been carved on the south face at both the places. The similarities between these sculptures from the Kailas and Pattadkal show that they were the handiwork of Chalukyan sculptors. It must not have, therefore, been very difficult, but on the contrary easy, for the Chalukyan artists to repeat their performance at Ellora

The Pallava influence is also discernible in the sculptures in the Kailas, though not as strong as the Chalukyan. There are two panels, both depicting the Mahishamardini Durga, one on the north wall of the entrance *gopura* (Pl. 5) and the other on the south wall of the entrance corridor (Pl. 6) According to Goetz, these are imitations of Chalukyan reliefs. He observes, "This is especially evident, e.g., in the Mahisamardini on the north wall of the entrance *gopura* which is a variation of the Mahishamardini in the Mallikarjuna of Patta-, dkal, which latter again is an elaboration of the famous Pallava relief in the Mahisasura-mandapa at Mammallapura"(29). But it is necessary to emphasize that among the various forms of the goddess we find that Mahishasura, the buffalo-headed demon, was usually depicted in his zoomorphic form in Chalukyan sculpture, whereas in the Pallava art he was shown in an anthropomorphic form as is evident from the famous panel at Mahabalipuram. The two panels depicting the goddess subjugating the demon are related closely to that from Mahabalipuram and it is, therefore, highly likely that the artist who carved these two panels in the Kailas may also have hailed from the Pallava country. He might have been brought by Kirtivarman to Badami and then taken to Ellora by Krishna I. All this is no doubt hypothetical but is certainly plausible.

Perhaps the most important and the most artistic of the sculptures in the Kailas is the panel on the south which depicts Ravana shaking the Kailas mountain, the abode of Siva. This colossal sculpture (Pl. 25) is carved in the true Rashtrakuta tradition being full of vitality and marked by a feeling of tremendous movement and energy. But the figures of Ravana, Siva, Parvati, and others here are not inordinately heavy as those in the Rashtrakuta panels in the Dashavatara Cave and a few others in the Kailas itself.

PARALANKA AND YAJNA-SHALA

The rock bridge joining the Kailas and Paralanka is a convincing proof of the latter having been in the original plan of the edifice, and even contemporary with it. The *kudu* motif on the *kapota* moulding of the Kailas is repeated on the facade of Paralanka; and the pillars with *ghata-pallava* capitals in the Kailas are also present in the first floor verandah of the Paralanka. The Andhakasura-vadha-murti on the northern face of the Kailas has an almost exact parallel on the southern face of Paralanka. The idea of excavating storeyed cave-temples was not new to the Rashtrakuta artists: Do Thal (No. 12), Tin Thal (No. 13) and Dasavatara are a clear enough proof of the tradition. Paralanka's first floor thus appears to be contemporaneous with the Kailas.

The Yajna-shala, which is on the same level as the first floor of Paralanka, has some exquisite sculpture (Pls.54-59). Among them are a group of Sapta-matrikas (actually eight) with Ganesha, Durga, Kala and Kali; and on the east are a queen flanked by *chamara-dharinis* (female fly-whisk bearers) and a dwarf (*gana*). All these figures have shed the heaviness which marks the sculpture in the Dashavatara and have consequently gained elegance; but at the same time they have nothing of the attenuated forms of the Chalukyan sculpture in the Virupaksha temple. They are, however, related to the representations of the river-goddesses Ganga and Yamuna on the doorway of the *garbha-griha* of the Kailas itself (Pls. 32, 33). Although many of the statues in the Yajna-shala are badly mutilated, they exhibit refinement in the female form achieved by the Rashtrakuta artist. "They are amongst the most glorious works of Indian sculpture of an overwhelming might, vivacity and beauty," observes Goetz, who further adds that here "vitality and refinement meet in a poised exuberance"(30). There is no evidence to suggest that the Yajna-shala was in the original plan and it therefore appears to be an afterthought. But much time must not have elapsed between the two, and the Yajna-shala can be dated to the last quarter of the 8th century A.D. Goetz also dates it to the period of Govinda III (A.D. 793-814), but on different grounds. He sees some Pratihara influence on the art of the time of Govinda III, but the prototype cited by him such as the sculptures from the temple at Osian in Rajasthan have hardly anything to compare with those in the Yajna-shala(31). The Pratihara sculpture, though elegant and vivacious, displays far too slender a form and we can feel that a certain degree of stylization, which marks the early medieval sculpture, has already set in(32). The sculpture in the Yajna-shala is free from such stylization and may not therefore be later than *circa* 800 A.D.

LANKESHWAR

The Lankeshwar Cave, carved in the northern escarpment of the Kailas, is a unique edifice in many respects. Stylistically it marks a further stage of development of the Rashtrakuta art, nay it is the very acme of the early medieval art of Maharashtra. Its plan is similar to that of the Kailas; a large hall supported by four sets of four pillars each and a rectangular *garbha-griha* at the back around which a *pradakshina-patha* is provided. The pillars are remarkable in that they are squat or stumpy and more massive than those in the Kailas, and their decoration is more florid too. They must have served as prototypes for those in the Indra Sabha and Jagannath Sabha of the Jain group at Ellora. The figure sculpture in Lankeshwar has undergone a noticeable change which is best illustrated by the famous panel showing the *tandava* dance of Siva (Pl. 64). It is no doubt conceived after the Dashavatara prototypes, but does not have their heaviness. Here the Supreme Lord is at once elegant and agile and has electrifying energy. The twisted body in the *tribhanga* (triple bend) posture, as if in a somersault, has a solitary parallel at Ellora where in the scene showing Ravana shaking Kailas on the southern face of the principal shrine, one of the female attendants of Parvati is seen running in panic with her body squirmed in a similar fashion. This betrays the stylistic relationship between the two panels, but the similarity cannot be stretched beyond this. Although the figure is badly mutilated below the waist, this Nataraja is perhaps one of the finest of its class. The massive pillars (Pls. 61, 62), though akin to those in the Kailas, have a faceted shaft and *ghata-pallava* and cushion capital and also sometimes have female figures on the brackets, which are rather reminiscent of the much earlier Chalukyan bracket figures at Badami. There is neither epigraphic nor much stylistic evidence to date the Lankeshwar with certainty but the beginning of the 9th century A.D. may not be far off the mark in view of the similarity of pillar types in the Indra Sabha, which is dated to the close of the 8th or the beginning of 9th century A.D.(33).

THE SHRINE OF THE RIVER-GODDESSES (Pls. 65-67)

In the northern face of the rock on the left and to the west of Lankeshwar is the shrine of the river-goddesses that contains images of Ganga in the centre and Yamuna and Saraswati on her left and right respectively. Although the river-goddesses are now somewhat worn out and have lost some of their relief features, they are all extremely elegant, and mark a further advance of the Rashtrakuta art. They each stand in a highly ornamental arch issuing out of the mouths of crocodiles — *makara-torana* — which is distantly related to the Chalukyan prototype, whereas the elongated female figures are reminiscent of the Pratihara tradition. Their slender forms with attenuated waists have close parallels in the female attendants of Matanga and Siddhayika in the Jaina group at Ellora(34), which, however, lack the delicate and sensitive modelling of the river-goddesses. Only Indrani from the Indra Sabha approaches Ganga to some extent, so far as the sensous form is concerned(35). It is quite likely that this shrine was carved by Govinda III in order to commemorate his victories in northern India, where the three mighty rivers meet at Prayag (Allahabad). The shrine may, therefore, be assigned to the first half of the 9th century A.D.

GALLERY AT THE BACK (Pls. 68-83)

On level with the ground floor of the main temple, a gallery, which surrounds the entire back half of the court, has been excavated. The back wall of this gallery is divided into compartments by means of pilasters, each containing a sculptured panel. There are forty-three such panels, all of gigantic proportions and reminiscent of those in the Dashavatara. They represent several forms of Siva. Vishnu, and Shakti, and are of great iconographical interest. They are all characterised by over-elongated forms, extremely slender bodies, and tall conical headdresses, which are also to be seen in the late Pallava and early Chola art. They can, therefore, be dated to the late 9th century A.D. Goetz has assigned them to the late 12th-13th century A.D., because he is of the opinion that they are comparable to the late Chola sculptures. This would be patently absurd because if such a late date is accepted, we should be able to find in them those traits which are met with in the Yadava temple sculpture. But that not being the case, the late date has to be rejected. We are of the opinion that the artistic activity at Ellora comes to a grinding halt in the latter half of the 9th century A.D., or precisely with the death of Krishna III (A.D. 939-67) who was the last great monarch of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. The considerable southern influence on the sculptures in the back gallery was undoutedly due to the southern conquests of Govinda III (A.D. 793-814); he had overthrown the Cholas, captured Thanjavaur (Tanjore) and marched down south to Rameshwar, and had in fact annexed the northern portions of the Chola territories to his empire(36).

The foregoing analysis of the architectural and the sculptural peculiarities of the Kailas complex shows that the principal shrine of the Kailas with its gateway, *Nandi-mandapa*, the so-called lower storey, the elephant-lion frieze, elephants in the courts, and the victory pillars were all executed during the reign of Krishna I (A.D. 757-72). We have also seen how it was possible to carve out such a stupendous edifice — of the size of the Parthenon in Athens — during a short span of twelve to fifteen years. Its architect was therefore justified in singing the praise of its divine character as described in the Baroda copper plate grant of Karka II.

Temple Complex

3

GOPURA

The Kailas rock-cut temple is enclosed within an enclosure (*prakara*) wall as is the case with any structural temple. On three sides, except on the west, are the huge cliffs of living rock in which the temple is excavated whereas on the west a wall-like screen is carved. The screen is crowned with a crenallated parapet carved with arches containing bells. The exterior of the screen wall has been divided into a number of compartments (*karnas*) by means of pilasters in which divinities and demigods have been carved. Many of these, however, are considerably mutilated, but some still retain their pristine features. All these sculptures are of huge proportions which can be said to be a distinguishing feature of the Rashtrakuta school. At the base, the *prakara* wall has a frieze of elephants.

If we begin from the north, the first sculpture does not seem to have been carved at all, for only its incised outline is seen. The second is Siva with ten arms, and next to him is Brahma, the Creator; both, however, are only partly finished. On the western face of the wall the first is the Lingodbhava-murti Siva. The noteworthy feature of this *linga* is that the lenticular recess is repeated in three loops to suggest the nether world, the earth, and heaven. There is, however, a better representation of this form inside and we shall therefore explain its significance later. Then there is a four-armed Siva holding a trident (*trishul*). The next figure is considerably damaged. The seventh is completely destroyed and the following one is unfinished. Then we have a representation of Karttikeya riding a peacock.

Above the fourth and the seventh panels, in a band, is carved probably an episode from the *Mahabharata*. On the left, the scene depicts Arjuna in the guise of a mendicant, and in the second scene he is shown abducting Subhadra, the sister of Krishna, on an elephant. The next scene depicts the battle between Arjuna and Balarama, another brother of Subhadra, who can be identified by his weapon—the plough.

The next three figures are respectively of Agni, Vayu, and Varuna, who are the guardian deities (Pl. 1). They are seen riding respectively a ram, a stag, and a crocodile, their respective mounts. They are the guardians of the south-east, the north-west and the west respectively. In the Hindu pantheon there are eight such guardian deities (*ashta-dikpalas*) and they are usually represented on temple walls, probably to protect the shrine from evil influences.

The antiquity of the guardian deities can be traced even in Vedic literature. In the *Ashapaliya-Sukta* of the *Madhyandina Samhita* of Yajurveda (XV. 10-14), we can discern the concept of the guardian deities. This is confirmed by the *Atharvaveda* (3, 26-27) which also supplies more information about them. This concept was later borrowed by the Buddhist also, but in Hindu temples the representations of the *ashta-dikpalas* begin to occur from the 5th-6th century A.D. onwards.

The depiction of the *dikpalas* on the front screen of the Kailas is quite significant. The Kailas is not a structural temple built from below, but an "architectural sculpture" where the work began from the top. Probably the guardian deities have been carved at the front to suggest that the visitor should see them first. The *Aparajitaprichchha*, a late mediaeval *Shilpa* text, prescribes that before actually starting the construction of a temple, the architect (*sthapati*) should offer worship to the *dikpalas* as they form a part of the *Vastu-purusha*. Thus an impression is created that the *dikpalas* were carved and worshipped first and then the temple was excavated(1).

In the corner formed by the screen wall and the back of the porch is an exquisitely carved couple of a Naga king and his queen, both standing (Pl.2). There is also a female dwarf (*vamanika*) seen standing to the right of the queen. The face of the king is mutilated but his figure is dignified. He has held up his left hand. There is a canopy of five naga hoods over his head. The queen appears composed as her lowered eyelids would suggest. She is decked with jewellery and wears a crown and above her head is a *naga* hood. Behind them, in the corner, is a flying figure. This corner has no doubt been used ingeniously by the artist to carve a couple. The last panel near the entrance on the left depicts Ganga on a crocodile.

There are thirteen panels on the right of the entrance. The first is the river-goddess Yamuna on a tortoise. She is flanked by female attendants holding fly-whisks, and over the head of the goddess is a parasole. She has placed her left hand on the person standing to her left. In the fourth panel is a Naga couple which is similar to the eleventh panel on the left side. The Naga prince has five cobra-hoods over his head while the princess has one. Both wear rich jewellery. In the next panel are carved god Indra and his consort Indrani on an elephant. Indra is the guardian deity (*dikpala*) of the east. The guardian deity of the south is represented in the next panel. He is Yama, the God of Death, riding a buffalo, his mount. The next panel is completely destroyed. The sixth panel does not exist now. Then we have the boar (*Varaha*) incarnation of Vishnu (Pl.3). He is carved in a human form, but with a boar's head and hence the figure can be identified as Nrivaraha. According to the Puranic story, there was a chief of the Asuras, Hiranyaksha, who vanquished the gods and took possession of their heavenly capital. The gods then appealed to Vishnu for help who assumed the form of a boar and killed the demon Hiranyaksha. The story of the earth having been lifted by a boar is quite old and is found even in Vedic literature, for in the *Shatapatha Brahmana* we are told that Emucha, a boar, lifted the earth. In the present panel the god is shown eight-armed and above him are seen Vidyadharas flying in the sky. The next panel facing north depicts Vishnu on his Garuda mount.

The following panel shows yet another incarnation of Vishnu, that of the dwarf Vamana, which is also known as Trivikrama. The god is eight-armed, of which three are now completely destroyed. His right leg is lifted up to mark his third stride. According to the Puranic story, Bali, the chief of the demons, was able to vanquish gods because of the strength he had acquired through penances. Indra was then driven out of his kingdom, but in order to save him Vishnu was born as a son of Aditi, Indra's mother. Vishnu as a young Brahman boy then went to Bali who was performing a sacrifice and asked the latter as a gift, land which he could cover in three strides. Bali gladly gave the land and Vishnu as Vamana covered the three worlds in three strides consigning Bali to the nether world. Vishnu in this incarnation as Vamana is also known as Trivikrama or the "god of three strides". In the panel the god is shown with his lifted right leg marking his third stride.

Next to this is a dancing Siva, but this panel is very badly damaged. In the following panel is the man-lion (Nrisimha) incarnation of Vishnu. The image is considerably damaged; the lower half of the body and many of his details are completely destroyed. And finally there is Siva dancing the Tandava. The lower part of the panel is badly mutilated but from what remains, it can certainly be classed as an excellent piece of art. The figure was originally six-armed of which three are missing and of the remaining, one holds a snake. The body is in the *ati-bhanga*, rather contorted, pose. There are traces of the semi-divine flying Vidyadharas in the upper part. Stylistically, this panel is not far removed from that in the Lankeshwar. The last panel over the cistern was never finished.

Above the entrance gateway is the projecting balcony, crowned with a wagon-vaulted roof (*shala-shikhara*). It has finials (*kalashas*) above and on each side we see a projecting chaitya window containing equisitely carved images of gods, whereas the arches themselves are supported by sitting males on either side. Two of the central finials have holes for flag poles. In the southern arch is a standing Brahma holding a water-vessel and a book in the left hands and a rosary (*akshamala*) and a ladle (*sruk*) in the right hands. These are the usual symbols associated with Brahma. He is flanked by his consorts and there are flying figures above. The arch is ornamented with pearl-tassels and festoons.

In the eastern arch is Ardhanarishwara-Siva, male and female in one, whose breast is broken. There is Vishnu in the northern arch, whereas in the western area is a rare form which has been identified as Siva as *lingin*. It depicts Siva with Parvati sitting in his lap and surrounded by his attendants with his bull-mount Nandi sitting below. What is interesting is that the god is shown as carrying a *linga* on his right shoulder and touching it with his right hand (Pl.4). The sculpture has been identified as Siva as *lingin* and it has been suggested that it many have some connection with Virashaivism(2), a branch of Saivism, the followers of which wear a *lingam* in their neck. The Virashaiva sect was found by Basava, the 12th-century minister of the Kalyani Chalukyas, and in the light of evidence from the Kailas, the antiquity of the custom of carrying the *linga* can be pushed back to a much earlier period. There is yet one more example of Siva as *lingin* which occurs on the outer face of the northern wall of the sanctum sanctorum (*garbha-griha*) of the Kailas which, however, is considerably worn.

The entrance to the temple has been provided through the *gopura* (temple gateway) which is double-storeyed and a passage is provided through its lower part for entering the temple. The upper floor of the *gopura* is connected with the upper storey (*bhumi*) of the *Nandi-mandapa* which also is double-storeyed. Inside the vestibule of the entrance door there is a chamber on either side on an elevated platform. Its pillars are squarish and have vase and foliage (*ghata-pallava*) capitals. On entering through the gateway we come across a doorway on either side of which are the Lords of Wealth, Shankhanidhi on the left and Padmanidhi on the right, holding their attributes, a conch (*shankha*) and a lotus (*padma*) respectively and having bags of money from which coins are seen flowing. They are of ponderous proportions with a bulging belly. The Nidhis as Lords of Wealth came to be carved on temple doorways from the Gupta period in the 5th century A.D., and as Kalidasa would have us believe, their pictures were painted even on house fronts. The Nidhis in the Kailas, however, do not seem to have been finished properly and betray crude workmanship. Above them are flying couples.

Further inside the portico there is Ganesa on the left and Mahishamardini Durga on the right (Pl.5). The latter is stylistically almost a copy of that carved on the back of the front screen, but is characterised by coarse treatment. From the gateway we see two courts, on north and south, and here we find equally exquisite sculpture on the interior of the screen wall. The first among these in the north court is Mahishamardini Durga referred to above (Pl.6). This is one of the finest representations of the goddess in this form. She is eight-armed, holding a number of weapons, such as, a sword, bow, shield, etc., and shown killing the buffalo-headed demon who, in his turn, is about to attack the Devi with a mace. The goddess is depicted riding a lion, her mount, who is shown pouncing upon a soldier of the demon's army and trampling upon some more demons. In the sky, gods have assembled to witness the spectacle. Among these are flying Vidyadharas and some divinities on their mounts. These are the guardian deities (*dikpalas*) among whom Indra, Vayu, Yama, Agni, Kubera, and Varuna can be very clearly identified because of their mounts, viz., elephant, stag, buffalo, ram, man, and crocodile respectively. All these are in the top row. In the second row on the left is Ishana on a bull and Ishwara on the right, also on a bull.

The presence of the guardian deities (*dikpalas*) in the Mahishamardini panel is in consonance with the account given in the *Durga-Saptashati* (II, 3-31) which refers to them as Lokapalas. We are told that when the demon Mahisha abrogated to himself the powers of all gods and himself became Indra, all the Lokapalas with Brahma and Vishnu created from their energies a female divinity — Durga — to annihilate the demon. From the depiction of the *dikpalas* in this manner, it has been rightly concluded that they represent a phase of transformation, a phase in which the Lokapalas were being substituted by the *dikpalas*(3). The most remarkable feature of this panel is that the demon Mahishasura is shown in human form and the sculpture is identical in composition with its counterpart at Mahabalipuram near Madras, which, however, has a buffalo head. The demon was represented in the anthropomorphic form in Pallava art (6th-8th centuries A.D.) and the Kailas panel may therefore be said to be the handiwork of a Pallava artist.

The representations of Durga Mahishamardini begin to appear from the 1st-2nd centuries A.D. in the Kushan period(4) and became common in the following Gupta period; but the lion, as the mount of the goddess, came to be depicted only later and the Kailas panel, as also that at Mahabalipuram, are the earliest examples in which the demon is shown in the anthropomorphic form(5). He is otherwise represented in the zoomorphic form in Indian art. The lion has no doubt added ferocity to the whole saga. In the words of J.N. Banerjea: "The intensity of the actual combat is very skilfully demonstrated by the artist who has also not failed to endow the relief with some genre interest by the introduction of the expectant divine onlookers in the upper section of the panel"(6).

The next panel shows Krishna lifting the mountain Govardhan. Cowherds and cows are shown near him. The following panel depicts couples. The next—sixth from the left—is of considerable iconographic interest. It represents the god and goddess of love — Kama or Madana and Rati (Pl.7). Although the figures have lost many of their relief features they are characterised by movement and grace. The god stands in a slightly flexed posture and his consort in the attractive *tribhanga* (triple bend) pose. In between them is a sugar-cane which probably the god is holding, for the sugar-cane bow is an attribute of the God of Love. Above is seen fluttering the flag of the God known as *makara-dhvaja.*

Next to this is Vishnu, followed by Vishnu and Lakshmi. Then again there is Vishnu with his mount Garuda who is shown here in human form. There are minor divinities above. This form of the god is referred to as Trailokyamohana Vishnu. To the north of this is an unfinished excavation of which only its front pillars have been partly carved; they have cushion capitals.

In the south court, too, there are sculptures on the inside of the screen wall, only a few of which now survive. The first in the north-west corner is Siva killing the demon Tarakasura (Pl.8). Siva's horse-chariot is being driven by the four-headed Brahma; the god holds a bow in his left hand and is seen taking an arrow from the quiver with his right hand, as he is about to kill the demon. According to the story given in the *Mahabharata*, the demon Tarakasura had three sons who, having performed great penance, obtained boons from Brahma who told them that they could be killed only by a single arrow and such a weapon could be weilded only by Siva. Siva then, assisted by various gods — hence he came to be called Mahadeva — prepared an arrow which was nothing but Vishnu; Agni became its barb and Yama its feather to stabilize the flight. Mahadeva made Vedas his bow and Brahma his charioteer, and killed the three demons.

Another interesting sculpture on the left is that of Siva as Bhairava (Pl.9). According to the Puranic story, Brahma is said to have created Rudra as Kapali and asked him to protect the world. Because Siva was insulted as Kapali, he cut off one of the heads of Brahma with his left thumb-nail, but the head stuck to his hand and would not fall away from it. Hence, in order to expiate for this sin, Siva had to wander as Kapalika for twelve years at the end of which the head fell off at Varanasi. The spot where it fell off is still known as Kapala-mochana. Bhairava is therefore one of the gruesome (*ghora*) forms of Siva. In the panel the god is shown with four arms, of which the upper right holds a broad sword (*khadga*) and a water-vessel in the lower right. The other left arm is akimbo and the lower right holds a snake

There are four more panels on the left, of which the first two are male figures, the third is Siva dancing and the fourth is probably Andhakasura-vada-murti of Siva. But all these panels are badly weathered in the lower half because of a stratum of soft rock. Further left are two unfinished panels, both badly damaged. The last one shows Siva-Parvati. Next to this, on the south, is an unfinished excavation corresponding to that in the north court.

GAJALAKSHMI (Pl.10)

The double-storeyed *Nandi-mandapa* is joined to the *gopura* by means of a rock-bridge. Under the canopy of this bridge and on the western face of the lower storey of the *Nandi-mandapa* is carved a huge panel depicting Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, seated on a lotus and being bathed by elephants flanking her. This is an excellent specimen in the Rashtrakuta tradition which we see on entering through the *gopuram* gate. The goddess is seated on a full-blown lotus in the vast expanse of a lake full of lotuses. The elephants with their trunks upraised and holding water-pitchers are carved in bold relief and are supplying water-jars to them. Over the goddess is a parasol (*chhatra*) and some semi-divine couples (*Vidyadharas*) are seen moving in the sky. The face of the goddess is mutilated, but the sheer size of the panel does not fail to impress the visitor. There are traces of an inscription incised on the lotuses below the seat of the goddess, but it is completely effaced and cannot be read. There is another record on the pilaster to the right of the goddess, which reads:

Radekula bhadrankurasya
Sri jala-kridau
dadhichandra

"The (gift) of Lakshmi, sporting in water, and Udadhichandra (a *gana* of Siva) by Bhadrankura of the Radhe family"(7).

On palaeographical grounds, the record can be dated to the 8th century A.D. and the panel is thus contemporaneous with the main temple. There are massive guardians on pilasters, flanking the goddess. Bejewelled and with a smiling countenance, they stand in the graceful triple bend (*tribhanga*) pose leaning on the mace in their right hand (Pl.11). There are similar guardians on the opposite side, flanking the entrance passage. All these appear, from their attributes, to be Siva *dvarapalas* (door-keepers).

ELEPHANTS AND THE VICTORY PILLARS

Entering through the *gopuram* we come across large open courts on either side of which stand an elephant and a victory pillar (*dhvaja-stambha*) each (Pl.12). The elephants are massive, bigger than life-size and stand on a high pedestal. The one in the north court has lost its trunk, and the other in the south is completely mutilated.

The victory pillars, 51 ft. (16 m) high, stand on a higher level for which steps are provided. Both the columns are identical. They are squarish with a constricted cushion capital over which rests a flat square abacus, and were once crowned by a trident, traces of which can still be seen in both cases. The square shaft is carved with a number of horizontal bands while in between them the space is occupied by a shallow niche with pilasters on either side. In the niche is a divinity.

The decorative bands have a row of *kirti-mukhas* with pearl-strings issuing from them; they are arranged in such a way that they form pearl festoons. Above this are bands of lozenges and beaded pattern and in between them is yet another band divided into registers by miniature pilasters. In the central register on the south face of the pillar in the north court, which is illustrated, is a person occupying a low seat flanked by attendants, while in the register on the right are three male figures, rather indistinct. The one on the left depicts a copulating scene (Pl.13). These bands are crowned by a trefoil arch over which are again pearl festoons. The abacus is also carved with a band containing figure sculpture which, however, is not very clear. The lofty, massive pillars, in the words of Percy Brown, are "in themselves finished works of art, gracefully proportioned yet strongly stable, their place in the architectural scheme being somewhat analogous to the obelisk in the Egyptian temple"(8).

NANDI-MANDAPA

The *Nandi-mandapa*, in keeping with the main temple, had of necessity to be double-storeyed, the lower one being solid (Pl.14). It is joined to the main temple by a rock-bridge, and has a huge Nandi in the upper storey. It is a squarish structure about 26 ft. (8 m) sq., supported by square pillars at the corners with *kichaka* capitals. The *kichakas* are male dwarfs, who are shown squatting with their bulging bellies (Pl.15). One of them has a grotesque face carved on his belly (*udare-mukha*) (Pl.16) which tallies with the description of some of the demons in Ravana's army as given in the *Ramayana*(9). The pillars too are adorned with decorative bands and are not very different from those in the *sabha-mandapa*. Along with the *kichaka* capitals there are brackets also, both supporting the roof above. Human figures are also employed as brackets. The overhanging eave of the roof (*kapota*) is carved in the centre and also at the corners with dainty floral scrolls.

The *Nandi-mandapa* has doors on all the four sides but only in the upper storey, though the exterior walls of both the storeys are divided into registers by pilasters, from which spring forth garland-bearing dwarfs (*ganas*). Enclosed between the pilasters are niches containing divinities as also amorous couples and the chaitya arches crowning them have human heads. This is one of the several motifs which came into vogue from the Gupta period (5th century A.D.).

Under the canopy of the rock-bridge we come across two giant compositions. Of these, the one depicting Siva as Gajantaka is carved on the eastern face of the *Nandi-mandapa* (Pl.17). This is one of the fierce (*ghora*) forms of Siva and therefore the artist has been given here maximum scope to display his skill. In the first place, the image itself is of gigantic size, and secondly, the subject is such that it inspires awe in the mind of the beholder. According to the story given in the *Kurma Purana*, a demon assuming the form of an elephant, used to harass the brahmins of Varanasi while they were worshipping the Krittivaseshwar *linga*. Hence Siva killed this Gajasura, and wore his elephant skin. But the story of Gajasura is also associated with that of Andhakasura. We are told that Andhakasura began to rule over the *asuras* after Hiranyakashipu was killed by Vishnu in his Nrisimha incarnation. By practising severe penance he obtained boons from Brahma and became very powerful. But Siva had to kill him because he began to cause annoyance to the gods. His friend, Nila, first appeared in the form of an elephant but Virabhadra killed him by assuming the form of a lion. Andhaka had been granted a boon that from every drop of blood falling from his body, a new demon would spring to life. In order to prevent this, the gods sent their consorts (*shaktis*). These were seven in number and are therefore known as the Seven Divine Mothers (*Sapta-matrikas*). They assisted Siva by collecting the blood from Andhaka's body into bowls. Siva then destroyed Andhakasura. Thus, these two different stories were amalgamated in the North Indian tradition and that is what we have at Ellora. Hence Siva is normally shown to have destroyed Gajasura first and then Andhakasura. This panel is rather baffling because it has been identified by some as Gajantaka Siva, or Siva killing Gajasura. But the very presence of the seven mother-goddesses suggests that it may represent Andhakasura-vadha-murti. In this latter form, Siva kills the demon with his trident. In the present panel there is a dwarf figure at the top right which is usually present in the Andhakasura-vadha-murti panels.

In this panel the god is shown as ten-armed, of which four support the elephant hide of Gajasura above while the remaining hands bear a *damaru* (drum), trident, the tusk of an elephant, and a bowl, and the lowest hand is seen touching the face of Parvati. The god is shown standing with the right leg lifted and planted firmly to his right, below which is the dwarf demon *apasmara-purusha* or evil personified. He wears anklets adorned with jingling bells. In between the legs, the *ganas* and Shringi are seen dancing and Bhringi is shown standing near Parvati. The god wears a jewelled necklet (*kanthi*) and also a necklace of skulls (*rundamala*) in the fashion in which the sacred thread is worn. His matted locks *(jata-mukuta),* though secured on the forehead by a snake-band (*naga-bandha*), are completely dishevelled, suggesting the gravity of the situation. The elephant head on the left is that of Gajasura and the female figures below are the Seven Mother-goddesses with their mounts, who assisted the god in destroying the demon. The most noteworthy feature of this panel is the sheer force with which the artist has successfully delineated the whole episode and one is overawed by the all-powerful figure of the god. This is one of the most impressive representations of Siva as Andhakasura-vadha-murti in Indian art.

In sharp contrast to the above, we see the peaceful form of Siva as Mahayogi on the opposite side (Pl.18). Conceived again in the same colossal proportions the sculpture depicts the god performing penance. The eight-armed god in the yogic posture is seated on a lotus seat supported by lions. His eyes are closed in deep meditation. To his right, in the upper part, are gods: Varuna on a crocodile, Vayu on a deer and Mahesh and Ishana on the bull Nandi whereas on the left are Indra on the elephant Airavata, Yama on his buffalo mount, Agni on a ram and Kuber on a dead man (hence his appellation, *Nara-vahana*). Nearby are sages, while below are Siva *ganas* (dwarfs) who are shown as musicians. This class of images of Siva is known as the Dakshinamurti as the god is said to have been seated facing the south when he taught the sages *yoga* and *jnana* (knowledge). Siva is said to be a great master of Yoga and hence his image

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in the form of Mahayogi — the Supreme Yogi — came to be carved in ancient times. Siva as Mahayogi is thus exactly the opposite of Siva as a Samhara-murti, carved in the opposite panel. The artist has here selected two entirely opposite forms of Siva and has delineated both the aspects of the god successfully, so much so that a visitor cannot but be overawed by the superhuman qualities of the god. Both these panels are flanked by massive pilasters having vase-and-foliage (*ghata-pallava*) capitals.

On the northern face of the *Nandi-mandapa* the most remarkable sculpture is that of Siva dancing (Pl.19). Set in a niche formed by pilasters, the eight-armed god of music and dance (and hence called Natraja) is seen dancing to the accompaniment of music played by musicians sitting on either side. Unfortunately, the legs are mutilated and the patches of mediaeval plaster conceal some of the relief features. Yet the panel is noteworthy for its vigour and movement. Flanking this on the left is Ardhanarisvara Siva and on the right is probably Harihara, a combination of Siva and Vishnu.

On the southern face of the *Nandi-mandapa* the central panel depicts the man-lion (Nrisimha) incarnation of Vishnu killing the demon Hiranyakashipu (Pl.20). Hiranyakasha and Hiranyakashipu, the demons, were brothers of whom the former obtained boons from Brahma and became a danger to the gods. Vishnu then first encountered Hiranyakashipu whom he killed in his man-lion (Nrisimha) incarnation.

In this panel the god with a lion's head is seen in combat with the demon and is attacking him with great force. He is six-armed, trampling on the demon and, with one of his right hands, he has caught the knot of the demon's lower garment and is about to hurl him into the sky. The demon is helpless with one of his legs lifted up and seems to be crying for help. In such panels the god is usually shown seated with the demon on his lap and clawing at his entrails. This form occurs in the Lankeshwar in the Kailas complex itself and also in the Dashavatara Cave XV at Ellora. The present sculpture, however, is more in the Chalukyan tradition for it has an almost exact parallel in the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal.

Flanking the Nrisimha panel are amorous couples (*mithunas*) carved in niches and there are many more on the pillars and walls of the *sabha-mandapa* of the temple proper. In fact, such *mithunas*, sometimes even in copulating postures, became a common feature of the early mediaeval temples in India. They are usually explained as the influence of the Tantric cult which was becoming popular in the post-Gupta period from the 7th century A.D. onwards. To the Tantrics, the female principle was supreme and the worship of Shakti became predominant. Their esoteric practices and rituals took place inside the temple and perhaps that is why they came to be immortalised on the walls of the temples. It should, however, be noted that in Indian literature, spiritual bliss is compared to the conjugal bliss. Hence the occurrence of erotic couples in Hindu temples of the early mediaeval period(10).

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The Kailas Temple

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The Kailas temple proper, as already observed, is not a cave temple as such but rather a monolithic rock-temple representing a structural shrine. It consists of a sanctum sanctorum (*garbha-griha*), a hall *(maha-mandapa)* having a portico *(mukha-mandapa)* on the west side, porches *(ardha-mandapa)* on either side, a *Nandi-mandapa* and the entrance gateway. All these four main components have towers *(shikharas)* of the Dravidian style but of successively receding heights, that of the *garbha-griha* being the tallest. This was facilitated by the contour of the hill and the main *shikhara* is 107 ft. (32.6 m.) high. It consists of receding tiers and is crowned by a domical member (*stupi*). This is an exact copy of the *shikhara* of the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal, a creation of the early Chalukyas of Badami.

The entire wall surface of the temple is decorated with figure sculpture carved in niches and over this rises the *shikhara* above the *garbha-griha* in receding tiers; it is crowned by a *stupika* (Pl.21). At the base of this *shikhara* is the small wagon-vaulted roof over the ante-chamber (*antarala*). It has a finial (*kalasha*) in the centre with two lions in combat. These lions again are semi-mythic creatures (*simha-vyalas)* but are rendered here very realistically. The lion standing over the fallen one is full of vigour and has pierced his claws into the latter's body. The faces of the lions, however, are badly weathered.

On the northern face of the wagon-vaulted roof is carved a very dainty chaitya arch crowned with a *kirti-mukha* from which issue pearl strings and festoons. The trefoil arch is fringed by a lotus-petal decoration and contains an image of Siva as Mahayogi (Pl. 22). The god is seated on a lotus seat in *padmasana;* he is six-armed and holds a snake, a drum *(damaru)* and some other attributes which are not clear. There are four flying figures, two on either side, and at the base are elephants and mythic creatures. It is surprising that though this image is carved at a place that is always exposed to the ravages of nature it still retains its pristine charm, and even after 1200 years remains one of the finest of its class. But it has thus far escaped the attention of art historians because of its location high up near the *shikhara.*

The roof of the sanctum, the *garbhagriha,* is flat but has a large lotus crowned by a *kalasha* around which are four mythic lions (*simha-vyalas*) in the four cardinal directions. They are seen standing alert and seem to be almost roaring. It may be noted that the lion was the royal emblem of the Pallavas of South India, and considering the similarity between the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram and the Kailas, it can be averred that the ubiquitous lion of the Kailas may ultimately be traced to Pallava art.

The walls of the temple are divided into panels by means of pilasters crowned by wagon-vaulted roofs which are placed along the periphery of the flat roof of the *garbha-griha*. But those at the corners have *stupikas* over them in the Dravidian fashion. The roof of the *mukha-mandapa* too is flat, but over it are carved a number of lotuses in receding tiers.

The temple is raised on a high massive plinth over which are carved rows of lions and elephants, some of them in combat, since they are after all natural enemies. The lions are in fact *simha-vyalas*. They support, as it were, the entire structure and the idea probably is that just as elephants (*diggajas*) support the earth, here they support the great shrine of Siva (Pls. 23 & 24). The tradition of carving animals, especially elephants *(gaja-thara),* on the basement has a long antiquity in Maharashtra where the earliest evidence is furnished by the Buddhist caves at Pitalkhora of the second century B.C. and which are located near Ellora. The lions and elephants of the Kailas are, however, sculptured extremely realistically.

RAVANA SHAKING KAILAS (Pl. 25)

Perhaps the most important and the most artistic sculpture in the Kailas is the panel on the south which depicts Ravana shaking mount Kailas. It is cut in the plinth of the temple on the south and is obviously a later addition. It shows Siva and Parvati on mount Kailas, the celestial abode of Siva, along with his attendants,. male and female, and the Siva-*ganas* (dwarfs). Below the mountain is shown Ravana seated, having ten heads, and trying to lift the mountain with all his might. There is no doubt that the mountain must have been shaken, as all the persons on it except Siva appear to be panic-stricken. Parvati on Siva's left is seen clutching the left arm of Siva; her female attendant is apparently in great terror and is about to run away as is suggested by the pose of the body. The poses of the other characters are not much different. Only Siva is unmoved and composed, for he must have realised the situation by his superknowledge and he has therefore simply pressed his left foot hard to the ground, as a result of which Ravana could not do anything before Siva's power. The entire panel is characterised by realism and movement. It is unfortunate that such a masterpiece should have been so badly mutilated; many of Ravana' heads and hands are missing and the lower half of his body is also badly destroyed. Even Siva, Parvati, and their attendants are considerably worn and have lost most of their relief features.

This colossal sculpture is marked by a feeling of tremendous movement and energy and is full of pulsating vitality. Hence it can be said to have been carved in the true Rashtrakuta tradition. But the figures of Ravana, Siva, and Parvati and the others are not inordinately heavy as those in the Dashavatara (Cave XV) at Ellora and a few others in the Kailas itself. In fact, there is every possibility of the temple having been named "Kailas" after this panel as was first suggested by Bhandarkar (1). This is one of the finest sculptures in the whole range of Indian plastic art and we can do no better than quote an authority on Indian art: "The composition is treated not only in terms of light and shade in depth but also sculpturally and representationally in depth. The result is a massive, large scale composition unique in Indian art and worthy of any great tradition at its peak"(2) The panel is admired by one and all who see it and according to C. Sivaramamurthi, "There is no better representation of the scene anywhere else" (3).

The crucial question is the date of this sculpture. It has been carved on the south face into the moulded plinth of the temple, and has been deeply inset in such a manner that the maximum effect of light and shade can be obtained. Stylistically it is certainly later than the main edifice, but how late is the question. Its location below the rock bridge joining the temple and the first storey in the Paralanka would suggest that it may not have been carved when the bridge was existing, for the simple reason that the panel under the deep shadow of the bridge would have been constantly in the dark and hence would have lost all its dramatic effect. In all probability, therefore, it might have been carved after the collapse of the bridge as a result of which the spot became well lighted. As we shall see later this panel is stylistically akin to that in the Lankeshwar portraying the *Tandava* dance of Siva and may therefore be dated to the close of the 8th or the beginning of the 9th century.

SCENES FROM THE *MAHABHARATA* (Pl. 26)

The basement of the hall depicts some of the episodes from the epics; those from the *Mahabharata* are on the north and others from the *Ramayana* are on the south. The *Mahabharata* episodes are carved in five bands while the *Ramayana* ones are in eight bands. In the first two rows is depicted the Kiratarjuniya story. It begins from the left hand corner. We first see Arjuna, the epic hero, performing penance and the fight between him and Siva over the hunted boar. Lord Siva is then pleased with Arjuna's prowess and grants him the Pasupata missile. Next is depicted the great *Mahabharata* war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. We see chariots, elephants, and foot soldiers and the bitter fight between them. In the third row is shown the heroism of Abhimanyu He enters the peculiar circular arrangement of the army in the *Chakravyuha* fashion. In the fourth row also the war is continued and at the right end there is Arjuna and his charioteer, Lord Krishna.

In the last two rows scenes from Krishna's life are depicted. In the lower band, starting from the right, we see Krishna's birth in the prison-house of Kamsa, his maternal uncle, followed by Kamsa trying to kill the child by hurling him down. Further to the left is the ogress Putana, who wanted to kill Krishna with her poisonous milk. On the extreme left we see the childhood pranks of Krishna such as stealing of butter, etc. The story then continues at the extreme left of the upper band where, because of his pranks, the naughty Krishna is tied to a stone mortar. Next to it is seen Krishna killing Bakasura, a demon who came in the guise of a bird to kill Krishna. This is followed by Krishna's combat with a lion and finally there is Krishna killing Kamsa, whose chariot is broken.

RAMAYANA SCENES (Pl. 27)

Although there are seven rows of the *Mahabharata* panels, they depict only a few scenes. But the *Ramayana* scenes, carved on the other side, are too many and have been crowded into the little space available. They are to be seen on the southern side where they are carved in eight rows. The scenes in the first four rows have been carved in the boustrophedon manner (4).

The story begins from the right end of the first panel wherein we witness Rama's departure from Ayodhya. There are two persons standing, probably Dasaratha and his minister, Sumanta. Rama is shown touching the feet of his father, Dasaratha, and Sita, his wife, is shown standing by his side.

Next we see elephants, horses, and men in procession. Here the residents of Ayodhya are going to see off Rama as is suggested by the city gate. Rama, Lakshmana, and Sita are about to leave for a twelve years' exile. In the left hand corner, they are seen crossing a river in a boat. The epic tells us that while going into the forest they crossed the Ganga, Sarayu, Tamasa, and other rivers. The river in the panel may be one of these.

In the second row the scenes run from left to right. The first scene, which is much damaged, probably depicts Rama's meeting with Bharata. This is followed by the arrival of Shurpanakha who wants to tempt Rama but her nose is chopped off by Lakshmana. She was an ogress who had assumed the form of a beautiful damsel. Both the brothers had therefore to fight with the army of demons. The three demon brothers, Khasa, Dusana and Trishiras, who were annihilated in the battle can be identified in the scene. The only survivor was Akampana who escaped from the battlefield and narrated the event to Ravana who then asked Maricha to help the former.

The third row begins from the right. Rama and Lakshmana are shown seated along with Sita, and in front of them is Maricha in the guise of a golden deer. Sita is enamoured of it and has raised her right hand to suggest that she wants it. This is followed by Rama pursuing the deer and Lakshmana assisting him in the hunt. Ravana avails himself of this opportunity and his abduction of Sita is depicted in the next scene. He comes in the guise of a mendicant and carries her away in a chariot.

In the next scene is shown Jatayu, the huge bird attacking Ravana; his claws have pierced Ravana's thighs and his beak is about to peck at him. Ravana is trying to chop off the bird who as the epic describes was seriously wounded in the battle. Jatayu reports the abduction of Sita to Rama, but this part unfortunately is badly weathered in the panel. In the next panel are Rama and Lakshmana with Hanuman, the minister (*sachiva*) of Sugriva, in front of them. Behind Hanuman is Sugriva occupying a raised seat.

In the fourth row, the scenes begin from the left. The first is the fight between Vali and Sugriva, the chief of the monkeys. In the central part Vali is seen fatally wounded, and Rama and Lakshmana are shown consoling his two wives, Ruma and Tara. In the following scene, Sugriva is shown seated on a throne and Rama and Lakshmana, along with many others including monkeys, are seen attending the coronation.

The fifth row, beginning from left starts with the meeting between Rama and Sugriva and in the following panel is shown Sampati, the brother of

Jatayu, who is reporting about Sita in Lanka. Hanuman is seen on the top of a mountain, about to cross the ocean to reach Laṇka. In the last scene in this row, Hanuman is shown entering the mouth of an ogress, Simhika, and coming out of her belly; consequently the ogress is seen lying down in the corner of the panel.

The sixth row also begins from the left where we see Sita in the Asoka *vana,* surrounded by ogresses. Then there is the fight between Hanuman and Indrajit, Ravana's son. Hanuman is caught and brought before Ravana where he is shown sitting on his raised tail. When an attempt was made to burn his tail, he escaped to burn everything that came his way with his burning tail.

The seventh row is considerably damaged. It starts on the left where we see Rama with some monkeys. At the right end are waves suggesting an ocean. Probably this indicates that they are building a bridge.

In the eighth row is depicted the war between Rama and Ravana. Ravana is destroyed and Rama emerges victorious. The panel ends here.

Episodes from the epics came to be carved in temples from 5th century A.D. after the revival of Hinduism under the Imperial Guptas. There are a few scenes of this nature carved in some of the temples at Pattadkal(5). As will be clear later, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* scenes carved in the Kailas are relatively later additions and they do not seem to have been conceived in the original plan of the temple complex. From the position of the *shardulas* carved on the basement of the Kailas, it is evident that these scenes were carved later only because some space was available here and this the artists have utilised properly and adequately.

The epic scenes are unfortunately not in a good state of preservation; whatever relief features they once had have all now been completely worn out. This is obviously due to their constant exposure to the sun and rain. Vandals do not seem to have caused them any harm simply because the panels were already flat and there was not much that could be taken away or ruined.

INTERIOR OF THE KAILAS

Ascending the stairs, we reach the main portico (*mukha-mandapa*) of the Kailas temple which is very elaborately carved and was once profusely painted. There are several layers of paintings on the ceiling of the portico, and these are described later. There are also massive squarish pillars, with benches (*kakshasanas*). The entrance doorway too is very elaborately carved with a variety of motifs and figure sculpture. On the interior face of the pilasters, flanking the doorways, are huge door-keepers (*dvarapalas*) akin to the guardians of Gajalakshmi near the entrance passage (Pl. 28). They wear profuse jewellery, gem-set crowns and are seen leaning on their maces. The one on the right has lost his right arm and even the face is also slightly mutilated.

The entrance doorway is carved with a number of *shakhas* and has a female with attendants at the base on either side in the tradition of Ganga and Yamuna of the Gupta period. Above, on the *shakhas* are lotus petals, lozenges, arabesques and amorous couples (*mithunas*), some of which are engrossed in a voluptuous embrace, while some are lost in kissing (Pl. 29). With their weightless bodies they almost seem to be flying. The door jamb too is mutilated at places, probably by iconoclasts.

The hall (*sabha-mandapa*) is squarish, 57 ft. wide and 55 ft. deep (about 17.35 m. sq.) and is supported by sixteen pillars forming cubicles of which the central one (*ranga-mandapa*) is the largest. The ceiling of the hall was once lavishly adorned with paintings and hence its appellation, *Ranga-mahal*. The squarish massive pillars are also profusely carved with a variety of motifs including Puranic stories and incarnations of Vishnu, etc. The shafts of the pillars bear two decorative horizontal bands containing a chaitya arch crowned by *kirti-mukhas*. The horizontal bands are carved with floral garlands and arabesques, whereas the arch contains different scenes (Fig. 6). One of them has an amorous couple on a *mancha* seat with a male and a female attendants, whereas the other has a beautiful peacock set in the arch (Pl. 30). On some of the pillars are mythological scenes such as the Kira-

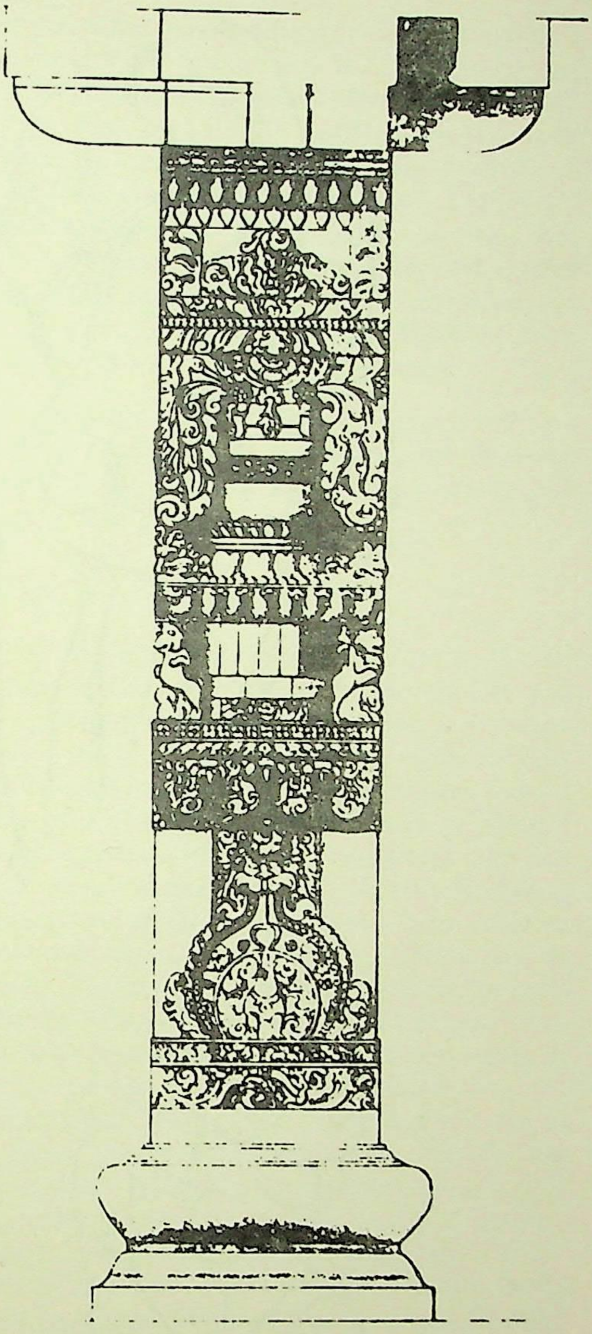


Fig. 6

tarjuniya story which is to be seen on the right pillar of the *antarala*.

On some of the pillars and also on the walls are erotic couples enjoying conjugal bliss in various poses (Pl. 31, Fig. 7). The presence of *mithuna* couples in the temple can be explained as decorative elements to fill in the available space. In fact, some of the ancient texts enjoin upon the builder to carve them as they have been described as auspicious (*mangal-abharana*); this is clear from the evidence furnished by the *Brhat-Samhita* of Varaha-Mihira, a late 5th—early 6th century astronomer. But the erotic *(mithuna)* scenes begin to appear from the 8th century A.D. as is evident from their depiction in some of the temples at Pattadkal. We have pointed out the influence of Chalukyan art on the Kailas and hence such scenes came to be carved in the latter also. They are said to be auspicious and protective (*rakshanartham*) or magico-defensive (*varanartham*) for they are supposed to ward off danger, avert evil and protect the temple from calamities(6). Another interesting feature is that in the earlier Chalukyan art, only couples are depicted in love-play but in the Kailas even their attendants participate in the game and are sometimes seen assisting their masters in their orgiastic activities. Thus the simple love-play turns into an orgy in Rashtrakuta times and later even changes into bestiality in mediaeval temples as at Khajuraho.

On the ceiling of the *sabha-mandapa* in the centre, is carved the figure of eight-armed Siva Nataraja on *apasmara-purusha*. On his right is Parvati standing on a lotus, and on the left is a sitting male figure. The sculpture cannot be seen clearly as it is now completely dark with a covering of black soot.

In the ante-chamber (*antarala*) we see on the right, the Soma-Skanda panel depicting Siva, Parvati, and Skanda (their son), below whom are the *ganas* (dwarfs) of Siva. Opposite to this, on the left, is a panel showing Siva-Parvati playing *chausar*, a game played on a board. But unfortunately the entire figure of Siva and the head of Parvati have been destroyed. Below are the Nandi of Siva and his *ganas*. On the ceiling of the *antarala* is carved a goddess who can be identified as Annapurna; she is flanked by Brahma and Vishnu and on the four sides are semi-divine beings.

The entrance doorway of the sanctum sanctorum (*garbha-griha*) is very tastefully decorated, but much of the carving lies hidden under plaster (Pl.32). Flanking the doorway are the river-goddesses, Ganga on the left (Pl.33) and Yamuna

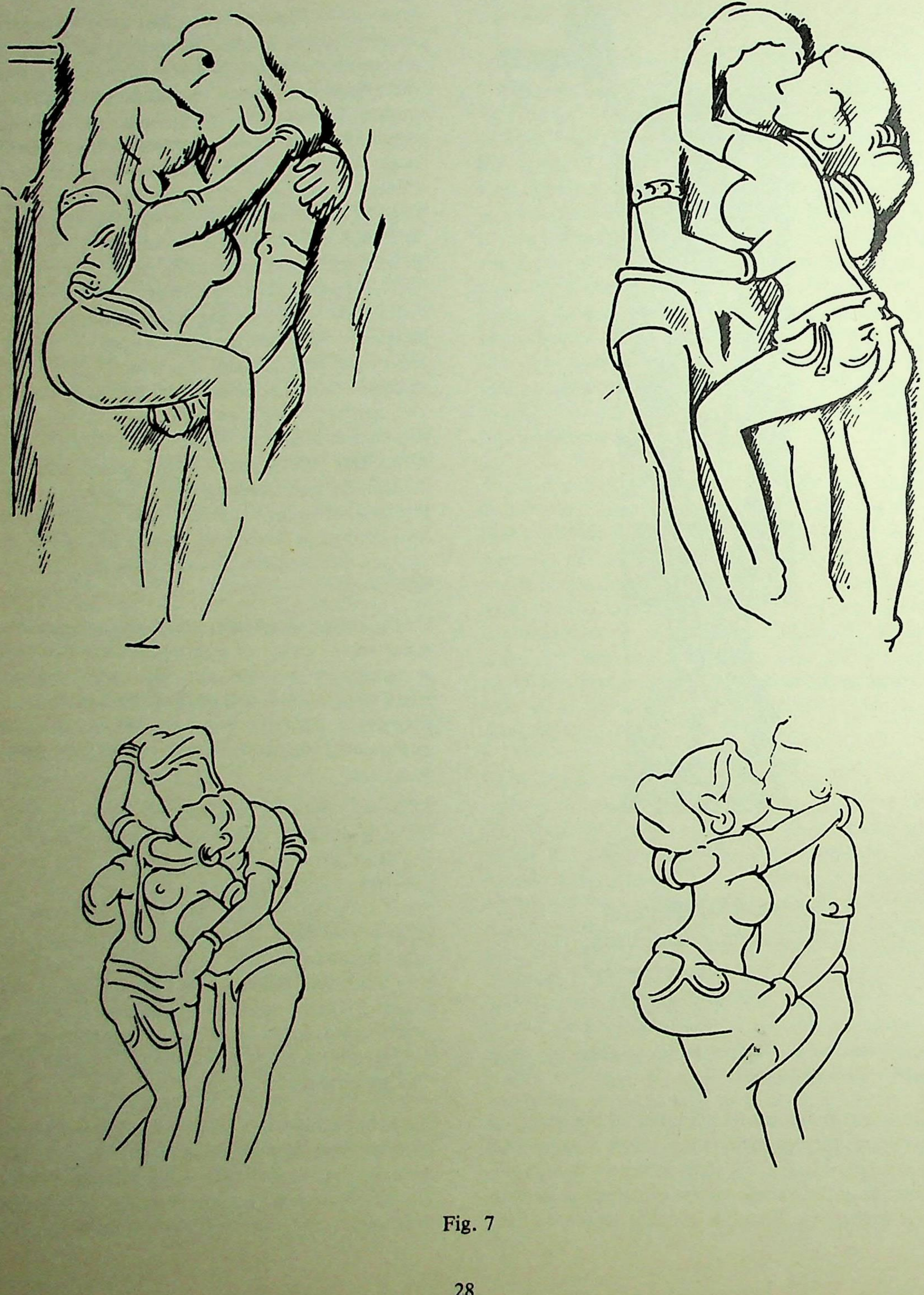


Fig. 7

on the right. Artistically they could be considered as some of the finest sculptures in the Kailas, but unfortunately their heads have been chopped off. They stand in a slightly flexed posture on their respective mounts, Ganga on a crocodile (*makara*) and Yamuna on a tortoise (*kachcha*). They hold a fly-whisk (*chamara*) in their hands and above their heads is a parasole (*chhatra*). They wear sparse jewellery, consisting of a necklet (*kanthi*) and a single-stringed pearl necklace *(ekavali);* their gem-studded girdle is most remarkable.

In the *garbha-griha* is the Siva-linga which was formerly mutilated. It was richly ornamented with jewels by Krishna I as is described in the Baroda copper plate grant(7).

SUBSIDIARY SHRINES

That the Kailas is a *panchayatana* shrine is clear from the five subsidiary shrines arranged around the *garbha-griha* of the principal one in its *pradakshina patha*. It is impossible to recognise their affiliation since there are no images inside them at present. Attempts have been made to identify these shrines and it has been suggested that they may have contained Shakta, Vaishnava, Saura, Ganapatya, and Kumara icons (8). These, together with the main Saiva shrine, constitute the six forms of *saguna* worship propounded by the great Shankaracharya and hence Ellora has been taken to be an important centre of Smarta worship. It has been shown by Krishna Kumar that the simultaneous worship of six divinities was also in vogue at Khajuraho in central India where he has noticed several Smarta *lingas* which symbolically represent all the six cult divinities (9). Presently, however, there are no images inside the shrines. There are only pedestals with mortice holes indicating that once there were loose images fitted into them.

SCULPTURE ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE MAIN TEMPLE

The entire exterior wall surface of the main temple is profusely adorned with sculpture. While entering the staircase on the north, we see on the right a panel showing Ravana shaking Kailas, a theme quite common at Ellora, and more particularly in the Kailas. We see here Siva with his consort Parvati, his mount Nandi, his son Karttikeya on a peacock, Ganesha and the sage Bhringi, all on Mount Kailas, whereas down below is Ravana shaking the mountain with all his might. On either side of the stairs are door-keepers (*dvarapalas*) leaning with great ease on the mace in their hands. On the other side of the Mahayogi panel, there is Brahma in the centre, flanked by attendants.

When we come up through this north staircase we see a beautiful panel on the western wall of the temple depicting Siva protecting Markandeya (Pl.34). The latter was a great devotee of Siva and when Yama, the God of Death, came to take his life, he clung to the *linga* for protection. In the panel the god is seen issuing out of the *linga* by the side of which is Markandeya. The four-armed Siva is about to thrust his trident into Yama's body who is standing before him. Siva's left leg is raised and he seems to be kicking Yama. This panel has an exact parallel at Pattadkal and is fully in the Chalukyan tradition. All these sculptures were plastered and painted in the mediaeval period when the temple was renovated by Ahilyadevi in the eighteenth century. The traces of plaster and paintings can be clearly seen in this panel even today.

GANGADHARA-MURTI (Pl.35)

By the side of the above sculpture is the one of Gangadhara-murti Siva, illustrating the famous Puranic story of Bhagiratha and the descent of Ganga. Siva is shown standing with Parvati; he is four-armed and is seen removing a lock on his matted hair with his upper right hand over which rests the torrential stream of Ganga who is seen above. The stream is falling over Janhu seated on the left from where it widens and rushes down, where sons of Sagara are seen. At the feet of Siva is a kneeling figure and at the top on the left is probably Bhagiratha, standing on one leg and performing penance. There are two more figures, one each on either side of Ganga. The story of the descent of Ganga is given in some of the Puranas and also in the *Ramayana*, according to which king Sagara had 60,000 sons. One of them used to misbehave. Sagara decided to perform the Ashvamedha-horse sacrifice-and when his sons reached the hermitage of sage Kapila, the latter reduced the sons of Sagara to ashes. They could be brought to life only by sprinkling on them the water of the Ganga. For this, Bhagiratha, their great-grandson, performed penance, and Ganga descended to the nether world and the sons of Sagara were brought to life. To break the force of Ganga's torrential descent, Siva caught the waters in his matted locks to slow down the flow.

The Lingodbhava-murti is carved on the right side of the entrance to the hall of the temple (Pl.36). Here we see a column in the centre of which is a *lingam* in which Siva in human form is carved. The story goes that once when Brahma and Vishnu, the Creator and the Preserver respectively, were disputing their individual claims for the creation of the universe, Siva suddenly appeared between them as a column of fire. In order to examine it, Brahma, in the form of a swan, flew high into the sky to search for its top, whereas Vishnu in the form of a boar began burrowing down to find out the bottom of the column as we see on the left of the sculpture. Both were, however, unsuccessful. But Brahma falsely claimed that he had succeeded in his effort and for this Siva cursed him that he would never have a cult of his own. Siva then appeared before them. The story only goes to show that Siva was the most important of the trinity and emphasises his supreme authority. We have already seen that there is another illustration of this story carved on the front screen.

Next to the above is an image of three-headed Brahma, which however is somewhat crude and appears to be late, at least stylistically. On closer examination we find that it was fitted into the niche later. As such, it may belong to the late mediaeval period in the 18th century A.D. when Ahilyadevi may have installed it.

The sculpture on the northern wall of the temple can be seen from the northern portico (*ardha-mandapa)* which has massive *Siva-dvarapalas*. On the left of the portico is Mahishamardini Durga (Pl. 37) and to the right is Siva killing Andhakasura (Pl. 38). The latter is remarkable for its sheer force and movement as also for the expressions on the faces of the demons. The eight-armed Siva, of ponderous proportions, is seen wielding different weapons and attributes, such as, the *khadga* (sword) and the *damaru* (drum). The upper hands support the elephant hide of Gajasura, whose head is on the right. The Lord's right leg is firmly planted down and with the left he is crushing the demon. The mediaeval plaster still sticks to some parts of the panel. A most noteworthy feature of this panel is the right hand of Siva holding the *khadga;* it projects out of the frame, which is a clear indication that even the positions of various panels were pre-planned when the entire design of the temple was conceived. Next to this is Vishnu on Garuda, his mount.

The Mahishamardini on the left of the partico is not as lively as that on the interior of the screen in the north court. The buffalo-demon is here shown in the human form, as in earlier examples which, as we have seen, was a distinguishing feature of the Pallava art (10). Next to this, on the west, is Siva with Nandi, his bull mount.

The southern wall of the temple is also similarly carved as we can see from the southern *ardha-mandapa*. From the left, the first is Lakulisha standing with his attribute—the *laguda*—in his right hand (Pl. 39). A historical personage, he probably lived in the second century A.D. at Kayavarohana (Karwan in Gujarat). He was a great devotee of Siva and is said to be the founder of the Pashupata sect of the Saivites. His images occur in many of the sixth century Brahmanical caves in Western India, indicating his popularity. The one in the Kailas has an exact parallel in the Mallikarjuna temple at Pattadkal.

To the right of the above is the panel showing the abduction of Sita (Pl. 40). Ravana is shown carrying away Sita in a chariot though Jatayu, tried to prevent him from doing so. In the panel we see the helpless Sita standing in the chariot and Jatayu pecking at Ravana's legs. Ravana is about to hit the bird with the sword in his right hand. Ravana was a great devotee of Siva and hence everywhere in the Kailas, he has been depicted as a handsome prince.

There are two more panels on the right of these. The first shows the Vali-Sugriva fight, an episode from the *Ramayana.* In this, Vali was killed and in the lower panel Rama is seen consoling Tara, the wife of Vali. Rama, and Lakshmana behind him, are both visibly moved by the death of Vali. Next to this is Nrisimha killing Hiranyakashipu, a better version of which we have already seen on the basement of the *Nandi-mandapa* (Pl 41).

Higher up on the south wall is a Gandharva couple in the sky. The male holds a musical instrument. probably a guitar-shaped *vina* so common at Ajanta. Though ravaged by natural agencies, the seemingly weightless bodies do credit to the artist.

On the overhanging eave of the roof of the *ardha-mandapa,* on the north and south of the main temple, are carved in low relief very dainty floral patterns. One of them on the west is seen issuing out of the *kirti-mukha* motif (Pl. 42) whereas the other on the north shows a flying couple as intertwined in the floral pattern.

On the exterior of the *garbha-griha* are carved a number of sculptures which are of high artistic merit. They are set in deep niches formed by pilasters on either side, joined in an elaborately carved *torana.* On the northern wall of the *garbha-griha* the most remarkable is Siva as Ardhanarishwara, standing on *apasmara-purusha,* i.e., evil personified (Pl. 43). Siva assumed this peculiar half-man, half-woman form to please Parvati. It so happened that the sage Bhringi worshipped only Siva and not Parvati who was thus annoyed. In order to pacify her, Siva urged Parvati to merge into him so that Bhringi had to offer worship to both. Here, the left half is female and has been consequently more delicately carved. The graceful curve of the body is accentuated by the slightly flexed posture. The jewellery and the coiffure on this side is also that of a female. The god is four-armed but the attributes in them are not clear as they are obliterated by the mediaeval plaster which can still be seen at several places. The tall slender figure and the equally tall headdress are indicative of the growing southern influence which ultimately can be traced to the Pallava art.

One alluring female figure on the east wall is stylistically similar to the Ardhanarishwara described above (Pl. 44). Her legs below the knees are broken and the face is mutilated. Her hairdo, which survives, is of the *dhammilla* variety and has parallels in the Pallava art (11).

On the eastern wall there is an elegant panel showing Siva with eight arms; his left leg is, however, broken. He is standing on dwarf-demon *apasmara-purusha* (Pl. 45). Many relief features of this image lie hidden under patches of old plaster. But of greater artistic merit is a panel on the south wall depicting Siva dancing. The god is four-armed but his legs are destroyed. His dishevelled hair and the movement of the body are realistically delineated. Below is the *apasmara-purusha,* wriggling under the weight of the god. His robust body and grotesque features lend him a comic charm; he is evil personified and is a distinguishing attribute of Siva Nataraja.

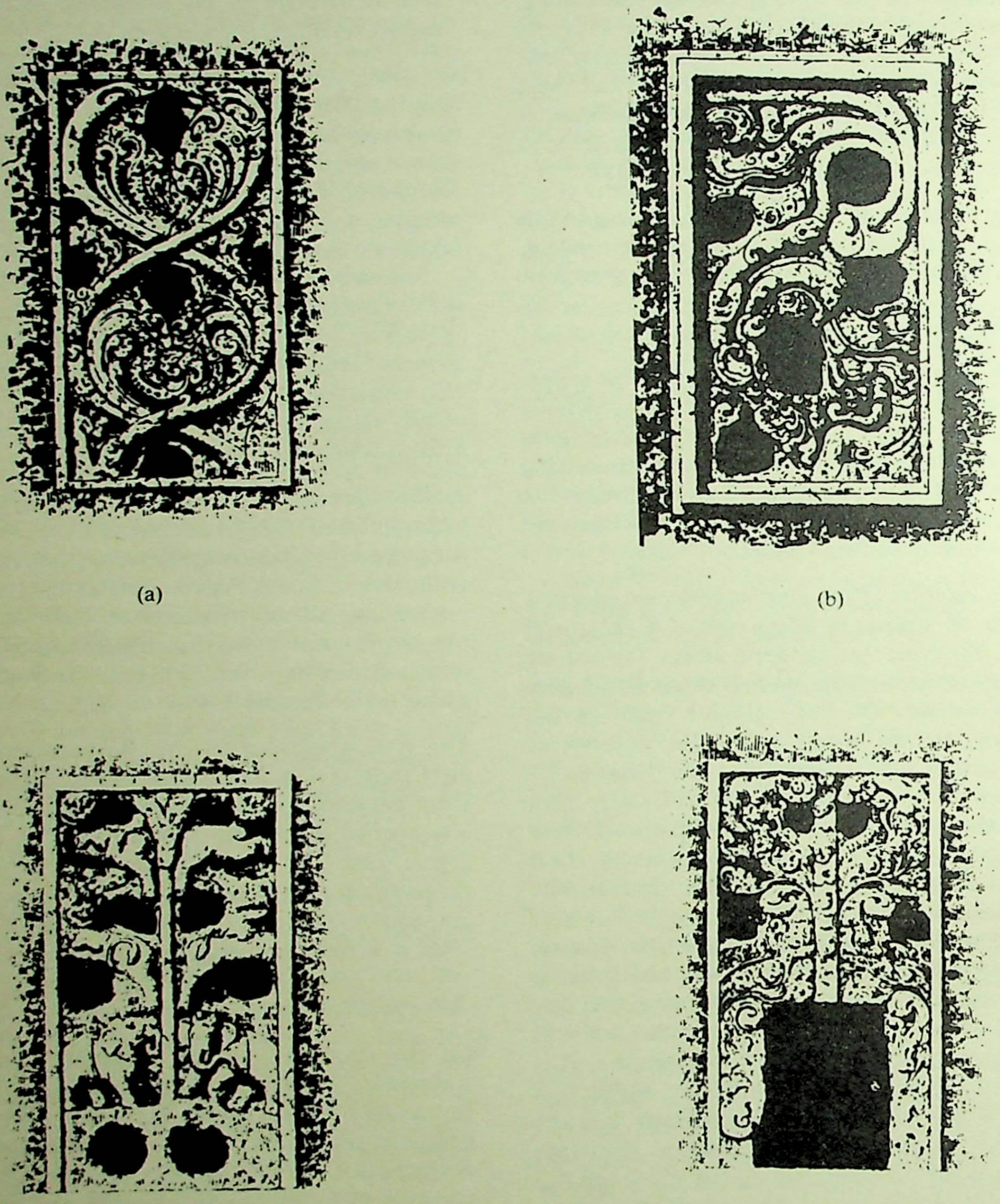
Next to this is yet another Siva Nataraja, with four arms, but his left leg is missing (Pl. 46). Flanking the god on the pilasters are peacocks with the most elaborate, florid, and intricately carved plummage. All the sculptures on the exterior of the *garbha-griha* are stylistically so identical that one feels that they were probably the handiwork of one and the same sculptor.

The five sub-shrines of the *Panchayatana* also have sculptures on their exterior walls, but many of them have been spoiled by the lime plaster which was applied in the late mediaeval period. Of the figure sculpture, that on the northern sub-shrine deserves a special mention. Here, there is a female standing on the left of the pilaster whereas to the right is a couple, kissing in voluptuous embrace (Pl. 47). Although considerably worn, one still feels their rapturous mood.

On the south-east corner sub-shrine is a Siva *dvarapala* (Pl. 48) standing with his left foot resting on his mace *(gada).* He is four-armed and holds a snake and other attributes that are characteristic of Siva. But for the mace, he could be easily mistaken for Siva himself, for even the dwarf-demon, *apasmara-purusha,* is also shown wriggling under his feet.

WINDOWS (Fig. 8)

The *sabha-mandapa* of the Kailas, as is usually the case with Siva temples, is rather dark although some light is admitted through the *ardha-*



(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

Fig. 8

mandapas on the north and south and the *mukha-mandapa* on the west. Besides these, however, there are six windows in all, two each in the side and two in the front wall. They are tastefully decorated and are perforated, but the perforations are so small that the windows seem to have been provided more for enabling carvers to display their skill rather than for admitting light and air. All these windows bear different designs. Thus Figs. 8a, d have exquisite floral patterns consisting of intertwined creepers, while in Fig. 8b the arabesque motif issues from top right corner. Fig. 8c is divided into two vertical compartments in which there are elephants at the base, one each on either side, and lions in similar manner above and in between these, wherever possible, perforations have been provided. The windows are stylistically akin to those in the Pattadkal temple (12).

MURALS

There is such a great profusion of sculpture in the Kailas that the remains of paintings in it are always overlooked. The entire temple was once lavishly decorated with painting on its walls and ceiling, but centuries of neglect and vandalism have destroyed much of it and nature too has taken its toll. The Kailas is also known as Rang Mahal or the "painted palace" only because it was profusely embellished with paintings. Today, traces of the paintings are to be found only on the ceiling of the entrance portico (*mukha-mandapa*) and of the hall *(sabha-mandapa)* of the main temple. Much of this is also blackened by soot. The Archaeological Survey of India has for sometime been removing with great care the layer of black soot and is carrying out measures to preserve the paintings by chemical methods.

The paintings in the Kailas belong to different periods as will be clear from the fact that there are layers of paintings one over the other. There are three such known layers of which the first is undoubtedly contemporaneous with the temple proper, whereas the last one has to be assigned to the 13th century A.D. The second layer can be dated, on stylistic grounds, to about the 9th century A.D.

In the western porch there are several layers of paintings, but they are all in an extremely bad state of preservation and now very little can be made out. However, excellent copies were made by the former Hyderabad State Department of Archaeology sometime in A.D. 1925 and they give a good idea of the subjects painted. All these paintings, however, are fragmentary.

FIRST LAYER

No.1 (Pl. 49)

In this panel in the north-western quadrant we see the central figure riding a *shardula* (a mythic creature made up of a combination of different animals and birds); he is shown turning to his right with his hands folded in adoration. The main figure, probably a deity —Siva— is to his right. He wears sparse jewellery but his crown *(kirita-mukuta)* is very elaborate. His lower garment is of the *ardhoruka* variety reaching the knees; it has multi-coloured stripes and it is thus of the *indrayudh-ambara* variety, that is, one resembling a rainbow. There are some male and female figures to the left and also above, all of whom look like flying figures and may be Vidyadharas. There are dwarfs (*ganas*) down below. The whole scene appears to be taking place in the sky and all the figures therefore seem to be gods and semi-divine beings. All of them look as if hovering in the sky which is full of clouds, but as Stella Kramrisch has rightly observed, "The ubiquitous clouds... may not be only emblems and atmosphere of the upper region. It is clear that here the clouds have been employed for separating different scenes as rocks were used at Ajanta" (13).

Above, in a square panel in the centre, are two elephants — rather baby elephants — playing in a lotus pond. A *gana* is seen riding one of the elephants. The entire panel — its composition and colour scheme and the style of draughtsmanship — is in the Ajanta tradition. The flying figures with their weightless bodies remind us of the Gandharva panel in the veranda of Cave 17 at Ajanta.

No.2

The other panel probably has Siva in the centre seated crosslegged and flanked by his consort Parvati on Nandi to his right and his son Kartikeya riding a peacock, his mount, on his left. There are umbrellas over the heads of all these divinities. In between Siva and Parvati there is one more figure, probably a female, and in front of the Nandi is a man, almost running. In the right hand top corner is the bust of a female who is also in the Ajanta style. All these gods are shown wearing elaborate jewellery but their crowns become taller this time. Moti Chandra has correctly traced the southern influence in these paintings. He observes, "In these panels... the linear feature of Badami had travelled far and crystallised itself. The colours have lost their modelling value; the linear draughtmanship which is bold and sweeping, does not attempt to model but only defines the contour of the body.... The humanism of Ajanta now yields to the world of gods and their doings" (14).

SECOND LAYER

On the second and the middle layer of plaster there are traces of painting. In one we see the god Vishnu riding his mount Garuda flying in the sky. The god is four-armed, holding a lotus and mace (*gada*) in the two left hands while there is nothing in the two right hands. He has a halo at the back and wears a tall-crown (*kirita-mukuta*) which recalls those in the late Pallava and early Chola art of South India. The panel may therefore be dated to *circa* 9th - 10th centuries A.D. The *garuda* here is in human form, wearing jewellery, a crown and a short *dhoti*. He is shown flying in the sky as mentioned above. On either side of the god is a female figure, one of whom may be Lakshmi who, however, cannot be identified properly as her attributes are not clear (Pl.50). The one on the right is fair-skinned while that on the left is dark; both however appear to wear a half-sleeved bodice. They are seen looking towards the god in adoration with folded hands. They wear sparse jewellery and their hair is combed back into the *dhammilla* knot which is daintily ornamented with pearl-strings. Both the goddesses ride what look like human forms.

Stylistically this painting is important as it is characterised by tall slender figures with long noses, narrow eyes, and faces without any expression. They are thus slightly removed from Ajanta for we do not notice in them the liveliness and the movement which constitute a distinguishing feature of the Ajanta style. The linear treatment of the figure, the protruding eye and the pointed nose, indicate that this is the beginning of the mediaeval tradition of Western India. The paintings in the middle layer can therefore be dated to the late Rashtrakuta period of th 9th - 10th centuries A.D.

THIRD LAYER

No. 1 (Battle Scenes)

The most interesting paintings in the porch are those which depict battle scenes which are painted on the architrave of the porch. In the first we see an army on the march, consisting of cavalry and foot-soldiers led by their general who is riding an elephant (Pl.51). The horses are well caparisoned and seen almost as if galloping. Their riders have probably spears in their right hands and round shields in their left . They have large rings (*balika*) or discs (*tatanka-chakra*) in their ears and wear probably a half-sleeved bodice of the *kurpasaka* variety. Their long hair is dressed into a bun on the top of the head and is secured by means of a ribbon. They have thin mustaches and clipped beards and they remind us of Muslim or Arab soldiers. In fact, their is sufficient historical evidence to suggest that Arabs were already coming to India for trade and some of them had also found employment in the Rashtrakuta court. It is therefore not unlikely that some of these soldiers are Arabs (15).

The foot-soldiers who are seen in the central part of the panel are also similar in appearance and have a shield in their left hand; the right hand may be holding a lance but it is not clear. Behind them are archers with bows and arrows and in front is probably the general riding an elephant. He seems to carry a bow in his left hand.

No.2

In the second scene we notice on the left soldiers riding elephants, but the panel is considerably damaged. In the centre is a horse-rider with lance and on the right are foot-soldiers with lances and round shields; they are led by their general riding an elephant. Behind his head is a short painted inscription in two lines in Devanagari characters. It reads *Svasti Sri Pramara Rau*. The elephant-rider may, therefore, be identified as a Paramara king. Who this King exactly was is difficult to say, but he can safely be taken to be Munja who is said to have invaded the Deccan in the 12th century A.D. This dating is also confirmed by the palaeography of the inscription. Formerly there were some more painted inscriptions here but they have since been completely obliterated. On the west, over the king's head, was a record which was read as *Svasti Kannaura devaraya* and the person was therefore identified with Kannardeva II, a king of the Nikumbha dynasty, who ruled in the 12th century A.D. (16). Similarly on the north side where a king was shown with some foreigners in his army, the record was read as *Mahamara loku* which, if correct, must have referred to the Mohammadans in the army (17). This need not be surprising in view of the fact that Arabs had started coming to India in this period and some of them were even employed by the Rashtrakutas (18).

In the third panel again is shown an army consisting of cavalry and foot-soldiers (Pl. 52a). The horses, well-caparisoned, are seen galloping on all fours. The central figure seems to be that of the general or the king for he has an umbrella *(chhatra)*—a symbol of sovereignty—over his head. He wears a short *dhoti* and a half-sleeved *kurpasaka*. He also probably wears a chain-mail and a helmet. His right hand is raised to suggest that his army should stop marching. Behind him are foot-soldiers with lances and round shields.

In the last scene there is a whole infantry battalion; the soldiers wear a short *dhoti* and carry a long spear and round shields (Pl. 52b). On the right is probably their king carried in a palanquin. There is a *chhatra* over his head. Probably the battle is won and he has come to inspect the guard.

Stylistically, the battle scenes make a complete departure from the Ajanta tradition. According to Moti Chandra, "In these pictures the linear tradition is fully crystallised and conventionalised. The wide receding forehead, the farther eye showing definite signs of protrusion into space, the foreshortening of farther cheek, the pointed nose, the bearded and moustached face show that the outstanding features of the Western Indian School which had a rigid control of painting in western and northern India from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century had been fully established." (19)

SIVA NATARAJA *(Pl. 53)*

In the hall of the temple, on the ceiling of the doorway of the southern porch, is painted Siva Nataraja. The painting is no doubt contemporary with the temple but appears to have been restored later when the shrine was renovated by Ahilyadevi in the last quarter of the 18th century A.D. when the outline was repainted in bold black. The god is ten-armed, holding a skull (*kapala*) and a trident (*trishula*) in his right hands, and also the *khatvanga* (a rod crowned with a skull); other hands are in the dancing pose. He wears profuse jewellery and skulls in his hairdo; the ends of his garments are seen fluttering because of the movement of the dance. The elongated eyes mark the beginning of the Western Indian school of painting of mediaeval times. Below the god, in a small panel, is painted a floral scroll, which probably represents a stylized crocodile.

TECHNIQUE

There does not seem to be much difference in the technique of wall painting at Ellora and Ajanta. The rock surface was first roughened by chiselling so that the plaster could stick to it properly. The plaster was composed of clay mixed with cowdung, chopped husk, fine sand, etc., and its thickness varied from about 1 to 1.5 cm. On examination, the plaster from the Kailas has been found to be made of ferruginous earth, containing large quantities of silica, iron, and alumina. The percentage of lime is very low; it could have been present in the mud as an impurity. Over this rough plaster were given one or two more coats of lime plaster which was made of lime and a small proportion of calcium sulphate. The plaster was always reinforced with vegetable fibres. The main difference between the technique of painting at Ajanta and that of Ellora is that there is no evidence of lime plaster applied over mud plaster at Ajanta. The pigments at both the places are almost the same; yellow and red ochres, *terra verte* (green), lime and carbon; blue is extremely rare. The use of indigo blue and not lapis lazuli as at Ajanta has been detected at Ellora. The binding medium at Ellora is said to be lime and hence the colours have not fused into the lime plaster. It has been concluded by an expert that the paintings have neither been executed in the tempera technique nor are they true frescoes for there was no other binding medium used except lime (20).

The painting in the Kailas is historically of great significance. Although Indian painting has a hoary antiquity of over 10,000 years when prehistoric man adorned his rock shelters with painting in the Narmada valley in Central India, there are many gaps in our knowledge, especially during the late prehistoric and early historic periods. It has, however, a continuous history from the 2nd century B.C. when the Buddhist rock-cut sanctuaries of the Satavahana period at Bhaja, Pitalkhora, and Ajanta in Western India were decorated with paintings. The art reached its zenith in the 5th century A.D. under the Vakatakas and the Guptas as the Ajanta and Bagh murals testify. Later still we can trace its development from the 12th century A.D. onwards. But for the intervening period, from the 7th to the 12th century A.D. the Ellora paintings constitute the most valuable evidence. Hence their importance.

Other Shrines

5

YAJNA-SHALA (Hall of Sacrifice)

The hall, which has been identified as Yajna-shala, has been excavated in the southern escarpment of the Kailas, at a height of 15 ft. (4.6 m.) from the ground. It is 37 ft. long and 15 ft. wide (11.3 by 4.6 m.) and is approached by a rock-cut flight of steps. The hall is supported by two pillars and two pilasters; on each pillar is carved an elegant female figure (*dvara-palika*). The figure on the left pillar is slightly better preserved. She has two attendants. Her hands and the left leg are damaged and even the face is now mutilated (Pl. 54). She is exquisitely bejewelled with a pearl necklace, armlet, and an alluring girdle with festoons and tassels, and heart-shaped pendants. She wears a dainty tiara and the hair is combed into an elongated *dhammilla* knot at the back. Her lower garment is long, reaching the ankle (*gulphavalambi*) and is seemingly quite transparent. On her right is a standing female dwarf *(vamanika),* holding probably a jug, and there is seen seated a male dwarf (*gana*) on her left; the lower half of his body is, however, completely destroyed.

On three sides of the hall are carved a number of sculptures, among which can be recognised mother-goddesses (*matrikas*) and Kala, Ganesha, and Virabhadra. There are three more figures on the left, but they do not appear to be divinities. Starting from the right wall, the first figure on the extreme right is a goddess seated on a lion and can therefore be identified as Chandi or Durga (Pl. 55). She has four arms, three of which are now broken and one holds a trident; the face too is badly mutilated. The central figure on the right wall is a six-armed goddess, but most of the arms are broken (Pl.56). In one of her right hands is the handle, probably that of a *khatvanga* or *trishula,* whereas in the left she holds a snake and a bowl of sweets (*modaka-patra*). She has a third eye and is bejewelled. She wears an elaborate crown and has a halo (*prabhavalaya*) at the back. Below her lotus seat is what looks like a jackal, gnawing at the hip of the corpse lying on the floor on her right. She may, therefore, be identified as Chamunda, one of the *Sapta-matrikas*.

The most interesting figures are in the left corner of the right side wall. The main image is that of Kala, the God of Death, with a skeletal body and gruesome features (Pl.57). His emaciated body and fierce look have been very artistically delineated. He sits on a corpse with his right foot on the face of yet one more dead body lying on the floor. He is two-armed; in the right hand he holds a dagger while the left hand is broken. Kali and skeletal figures have been shown flanking behind Kala obviously because there was no space available. We see Kali to the right of Kala; she is equally fierce looking and emaciated. Like Kala, she also holds a dagger in her right hand and a bowl. This image of Kala is perhaps one of the most remarkable in Indian art. According to Zimmer, "These figures along the west wall represent three aspects of Devi, centre of the lotus, the creating and the preserving aspect, right on the lion, the warrior aspect (*Durga*), at the left, on two dead or dying men, is Kala (*time*), the lord of death, with the goddess peering over his right shoulder and at his left, a skeleton"(1). R. Sengupta, who has made a very exhaustive study of the sculptures in the *Yajna-shala* rightly suggests that the corpse on the floor with the jackal is to be taken as Chamunda's vehicle as is often depicted in Eastern India and also in some cases in South India(2). But he has also pointed out a parallel nearer home, at Galaganath (District Dharwar, Karnatak) where in the Galageshwar temple, there is a similar image of Chamunda kept in the *garbha-griha*(3). There is also a similar arrangement in the Devgad rock-cut panel of the *Matrikas*(4).

On the back wall or the southern wall of the hall are the *sapta-matrikas*, each having a child in her lap as in Cave XIV. Along with them as usual is Ganesha, who is the first starting from the left corner. He has four arms, two of which hold fly-whisks (*chamara*) and in one of the right hands is a snake, whereas in one of the left hands is a bowl of sweets. His trunk, however, is now broken.

Next to Ganesha is Varahi, the consort of Varaha (Vishnu); her mount is the boar. The third figure is that of Indrani, the *sakti* of Indra; unfortunately she is completely destroyed but for her legs and the elephant, her mount. The fourth is a four-armed goddess, seated like others in the *ardha-paryankasana* on her lotus seat. Her mount looks like a buffalo and therefore she cannot be properly identified. Next to this is Vaishnavi as is clear from the Garuda in human form which is her vehicle; she is the consort of Vishnu. The sixth is Kaumari, with a child in her lap and with a peacock on her seat; her bust is completely destroyed. The seventh is Maheshwari, the *sakti* of Siva, also with a child in her lap (Pl. 58). She is four-armed and in one of her right hands she holds a trident (*trishula*) and carries a halo (*prabha-valaya*) behind her head. Eighth is Brahmani, the *sakti* of Brahma. She has four arms, but her head is now destroyed. The goose, her mount, is carved on the seat. The last is Virabhadra, as is clear from the bull on the seat, but the upper part is now missing. He holds a begging bowl in his left hand. In the north-eastern corner is carved a Garuda, the royal emblem of the Rashtrakutas.

The most interesting figures in the *Yajna-shala* which require a closer examination are those carved along the left wall (Pl.59). There are three figures, all females, with only two hands, and they are therefore obviously not divinities and hence they are unique. On either side of the central figure is a fly-whisk bearer (*chamara-dharini*) each, suggesting thereby that she is a royal personage. There is a male dwarf (*gana*) on the right. The head, the hands and the legs of the central figure are partly destroyed. She is seated in the *ardha-paryankasana* on a throne whereas all the remaining figures have a roll cushion at the back. She has rightly been identified as a Rashtrakuta queen and the hall as a *Yajna-shala*. The main reason for this is the existence of two square rock-cut altars in the hall behind the pillars. R. Sengupta, who studied this problem thoroughly, observes: "Yajnasala is a place where sacrifices are offered according to the Vedic rites. We do not know for certain what kind of *Yajna* was performed or if at all a *Yajna* was performed in the *Yajnasala* of Kailas. The size of Yajnasala, however, does not favour the idea of a *Yajna* actually being performed there by a king, with his retinue and the paraphernalia required for a *Yajna*. Alternatively, the Yajnasala might have been executed in memorium of the *yajna* performed elsewhere. The two incomplete rock-cut sacrificial pits on the floor also point towards its non-functional character. From the arrangement, however, it is inferred that the sacrifice, whichever kind and wherever it might have been performed, was aimed at obtaining divine power for gaining supremacy over the other rulers, a presumption which is supported by the presence of the *matrikas* held as martial goddesses. Among the sacrifices which are believed to confer kingship and paramountcy are *Agnistoma, Vajapeya* and *Asvamedha*"(5). He further adds, "There has been some controversy over the efficacies of the respective sacrifices.... It may, however, be mentioned that Vedic ritualism lost its orthodox character in the historic period and at the time when Kailas was excavated there used to be fewer sacrifices. In the Yajnasala of Kailas also the details as were laid down in the Vedic texts cannot be expected. The plan of the Yajnasala of Kailas approximates the one for *Agnistoma* having eight component parts in the drawing given in the Ramakrishna Mission's "Cultural Heritage of India"(6). Of the eight parts, the Kailas Yajna-shala has five parts according to Sengupta(7). He concludes, "The *Yajnasala* was designed on the analogy of the *Yajnasala* for *Agnistoma* which enshrined the Matrikas too"(8). This he credits to Govinda III, one of the mighty Rashtrakuta monarchs, who became the overlord of the Deccan in A.D. 794 and set out on his conquest of northern India around A.D. 800. The queen depicted in the sculptures on the left or eastern wall, according to him, was probably the queen of Govinda III, Gamundabbe. Sengupta's identifications are plausible and deserve serious consideration.

But the most enigmatic problem is the presence of the royal lady in the Yajna-shala. Why was it necessary to do so, more especially in a male dominated society in ancient India? Here the literary evidence comes to our rescue. The queen played a very important role in the performance of a sacrifice in ancient India and we have the representation of the queen of the great Gupta emperor Samudragupta on his Asvamedha type of gold coins. We need not go into the details of the ritual in which the queen took part, but the evidence from the *Ramayana* is very pertinent. We are told that when Rama performed the *Ashvamedha* sacrifice after Sita's banishment, her golden image was made as she was not present (*Ramayana*, 9,91,25). Could it be then that the queen Gamundabbe of Govinda III was unfortunately not present when the *Agnistoma* sacrifice was performed and hence the statue was made? She also may have come later to be sculptured in the *Yajna-shala* when the occasion was commemorated.

The sculptures in the *Yajna-shala* are in a way unique and stand in a class by themselves. In the first place, they are all carved in the round and are statues in the true sense of the term. Such sculpture in the round is extremely rare in Indian art and save for the Kushana school, both at Mathura and Gandhara, it is almost-non-existent. Secondly, it marks a further stage in the development of the early mediaeval sculpture in the Deccan. These sculptures are not as massive and vigorous as those in the Dashavatara or some of the figures in the Kailas itself, but are of human proportions and subdued, yet at the same time more lively. They have shed much of their earlier heaviness but are not yet slim and trim. They are robust and full of vitality, a characteristic which they have inherited from the earlier period. Could this be due to the Pratihara influence which may have trickled into the Deccan at this time, for the Rashtrakuta monarchs were constantly making inroads into the Pratihara territory?

PARALANKA

To the east of the *Yajna-shala* and adjoining it in the northern escarpment is a four-storeyed excavation which, however, is unfinished. This obviously must have been in the original plan of the complex because there was a rock-cut bridge joining the main temple and the first storey of this excavation, but unfortunately the bridge collapsed in ancient times. This bridge extended from the southern porch of the main temple. The four-storeyed excavation, as already stated, is unfinished and is devoid of any carving or sculpture. The second storey has arches raised on pillars whereas the uppermost floor has an opening at the top. It is likely that this area was excavated along with the main temple as the work proceeded and the halls were probably used for the residence of the artisans and also for storing their tools and implements. For had this been intended as a shrine, there would have been some sculpture on the walls and carving on the pillars. But all the four storeys are severely plain. This structure is locally known as Paralanka.

LANKESHWAR

This cave has been excavated in the northern rock face opposite the *sabha-mandapa* of the Kailas temple and on level with it. It is approached by a flight of steps where we first see a panel depicting Gajalakshmi which, however, is much smaller than and inferior to that near the entrance of the Kailas. Here, the goddess is shown seated on a lotus and holding a lotus in her hand. Some geese can also be seen in the lotus pond. There are four elephants bathing her, two on either side. Of these, the upper ones are bigger than the lower ones. She is also flanked by attendants.

The temple proper consists of a *Nandi-mandapa*, a *sabha-mandapa* and a *garbha-griha* with a circumbulatory path (*pradakshina path*) around it. The *Nandi-mandapa* has a huge Nandi and a *Siva-dvarapala* on either side (Pl.60). To the left of the *Nandi-mandapa* is a male divinity with two female attendants. The *sabha-mandapa* is most remarkable as it is lavishly ornamented with sculptures and very ornate massive pillars. The hall has a raised floor with a deep passage around it. It is supported by sixteen massive pillars richly carved with arabesque and floral patterns (Pl.61). They are rather stumpy with short shafts and highly ornate vase and foliage (*ghata-pallava*) capitals studded with gems and pearl festoons (Pl.62). They produce an effect of "solidity and grandeur, unlike anything else even in the cave-architecture of India"(9). They are perhaps the finest of their class in the entire range of Indian art. Those in the front row are joined by a parapet which too on the exterior is richly carved with erotic couples in panels separated by miniature pilasters (Pl.63). The ceiling of the cave was once adorned with paintings which are now completely destroyed. There are, however, traces of a painting on the ceiling of the *Nandi-mandapa* showing Siva dancing with attendants.

The entire length of the northern wall and partly of the eastern is carved with gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, whereas the cave is open on the south side. The first panel on the left has Ganesha with four arms, of which the two right hands hold a battle-axe (*parashu*) and the broken tusk, and in the left ones a rosary (*akshamala*) and a bowl of sweets which the god is eating with his trunk. The second is Vishnu in his Nrisimha incarnation tearing out the bowels of Hiranyakashipu. The face of the god is completely mutilated. Next we see the trinity of the Hindu pantheon —Brahma, Mahesh and Vishnu with their respective attributes and attendants. Following this is Parvati holding in her left hand a lotus on which is a small figure of Ganesha; there is a *linga* in the remaining two hands. Next is the boar incarnation (*Varaha*) of Vishnu with four hands; he is shown protecting Prithvi, the earth goddess. The sixth panel depicts Surya, the Sun-god, wearing rich jewellery and holding a lotus which is his distinguishing attribute. He is flanked by devotees. In the next panel we see Siva and Parvati playing dice. The Nandi and *ganas* are seen below. All these are recurring subjects in the Kailas complex.

The entrance doorway of the *garba-griha* is flanked by the river-goddesses Ganga on the left and Yamuna on the right, standing on a crocodile and a tortoise respectively. Inside the *garbha-griha* is a *linga* and on the back wall is the Trimurti. The three-headed god is usually mistaken to represent the Hindu Trimurti, but in fact they are the different forms of Siva himself. The left face is Vamadeva (Siva as Creator), the central one represents Siva as Protector (Tatpurusa), and the right one is Siva as the Destroyer (Aghora).

On the right side of the *garbha-griha* is a panel showing Ravana shaking Kailas which is much inferior to that on the basement of the Kailas itself.

The finest sculpture in Lankeshwar is carved on the back wall of the right aisle (Pl.64). This is one of the grandest representations of its class, not only at Ellora but in the entire range of Indian art. The image is carved out in full relief and seems to be bursting forth beyond the frame. Here Siva is depicted as dancing the Tandava, but unfortunately the whole right leg and part of the left leg are now destroyed. The god has six arms, of which the upper left holds a *damaru* and the lower left a snake; the object in the upper right hand is not clearly seen and the remaining three hands are completely missing. The *jata-mukuta* of the god is very intricately carved; he wears sparse jewellery on his person. His lower garment (*antriya*) is secured on the waist by a *katisutra*. His body is shown in the *tribhanga* pose, nay, it is almost squirming. Siva danced the Tandava at the time of *Pralaya*, the moment when the whole world was coming to an end. His third eye on the forehead, which looks lozenge-shaped, indicates his wisdom. Near the left foot, which survives, there are two musicians, one playing upon the flute and the other clashing cymbals; below the left foot is a demon being trampled. There are more figures on the right and left, probably devotees, and above are Gandharva couples.

Siva as Nataraja can be said to be the contribution of South India to Indian art. Traditionally, Chidambaram, which lies on the Madras—Kumbhakonam section of Southern Railway, is supposed to be the home of Nataraja, because it was here that the great god danced the Tandava. According to the story, Siva is said to have gone in the female form, along with Vishnu, to the Taraka forest to defeat the sages there in a debate on the *Mimamsa* school of Hindu philosophy. When Siva arrived, the sages became angry and tried to drive him away. They created a tiger from the sacrificial fire whom Siva killed and wore his skin. The snake they created was worn by Siva around his neck as an ornament, and he then began to dance. The sages then sent a demon over whom Siva trampled. This is the representation of the demon-dwarf *apasmara-purusha,* evil personified. Siva is said to have danced 108 dance forms all of which have been represented over the *gopuram* of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram.

Hence Siva is said to be the god of dance and music and hence the great popularity of Nataraja Siva, especially in South India.

There is no doubt that the artist has been highly successful in carving this sculpture for he has rendered it most lively and animating. All the minutest details have been executed with great care. The swinging curves of the garments which are seen fluttering are betoken of the quick movement, so do the postures of hands. The sculpture belongs to the tradition of the massive, gigantic specimens of the Rashtrakuta art that we have already seen on the walls of the Kailas, and there are many more in the Dashavatara, Cave XV at Ellora. But the one in Lankeshwar is more sophisticated and does not display the raw energy of the earlier prototypes. It can be taken to mark a further stage in the development of Rashtrakuta sculpture. It is neither gigantic nor massive, and has shed much of the heaviness that is a characteristics feature of the early Rashtrakuta sculptures. The god here has a supple body and slender limbs and perhaps that is why it could squirm with such leonine grace. The facial features were once carved with extreme care, but were destroyed by vandals in the 17th century A.D. The sculpture is so lively and so full of vitality that it is nothing but electrifying energy personified, and even the finest Chola bronzes appearing rather static in comparison with it. This is thus one of the greatest achievements of the Indian artist and marks the zenith of Rashtrakuta art. It is exactly from this point that the decline sets in as is amply testified by the sculptures on the left wall. Stylistically the Siva Tandava is akin to the panel depicting Ravana skaking Kailas which is carved on its basement on the south and it is not unlikely that both are the handiwork of one and the same artist.

On the five southern pillars are carved certain divinities. The first is Gangadhara-Siva and the second is Siva-Parvati. Next is a form of Siva which is much destroyed and cannot be identified. The fourth is Ardhanarishwara-Siva, and the last is Mahishamardini Durga. All these images are considerably mutilated.

As compared to the Siva Tandava, the other sculptures in the Lankeshwar are of inferior workmanship. They are characterised by coarse treatment and some of them are not even proportionate. The way they are carved suggests that they may not have been in the original plan of the cave complex and as such may have been executed later. The Lankeshwar cave may have been excavated sometime at the close of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th century A.D.(10).

RIVER-GODDESS CHAPEL

In the north court, the river-goddess shrine is excavated into the southern face of the cliff for which a flight of steps has been provided (Pl.65). On the plinth is some carving in panels divided by registers, but much of it is now destroyed and is indistinct. On the left is a giant *dvarapala* (doorkeeper) who seems to be a *Siva-dvarapala.* He is four-armed with the upper left hand holding a snake, and the mace in the lower, whereas in the upper right hand is a trident, but the lower right hand is akimbo. There was a similar figure on the right but it is now completely destroyed. His face is mutilated but the details of the *kirita-mukuta* that he wears can still be seen.

The shrine proper is nothing but an open verandah, (23½ ft. long, 9 ft. deep. and 11 ft. high) (7.17 m. by 2.75 m. by 3.36 m.) with two pillars and two pilasters which are different from those in the Kailas. They are fluted with a roll moulding at the base and a cushion at the top. The capital is two-armed. In the back wall of the shrine are similar pilasters forming three panels in which are carved the three river-goddesses—Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, the holiest of the Indian rivers. They are set in niches *(deva-koshthas)* having miniature pilasters crowned by a *makara-torana* issuing out of a *kirti-mukha*. The *torana* is most delicately carved with florid *makara*—crocodile tails and so is the *kirti-mukha*, but the entire carving has weathered to a considerable degree.

The first goddess on the left is Saraswati standing on a lotus and having lotus creepers with swans on her sides carved in low relief (Pl.66). Both of her legs below the knees are now broken; the right arm is completely broken off. She has a halo behind her head. In spite of all this mutilation, one is impressed by the slender, proportionate limbs, the flexed *tribhanga* posture and the delicacy with which the details have been carved. The goddess wears a thin transparent lower garment, secured at the waist by a jewelled girdle (*mekhala*), and its front pleats are seen touching the ground.

In the centre is Ganga on *makara*, her mount. She is seen standing erect while the goddesses on either side are slightly bent towards her. Her right hand and right breast are broken and the face too is mutilated. She also has lotus creepers on her sides. In the panel on the right is a similar image which can be identified as that of Yamuna because of her mount, the tortoise (Pl.67). Both of her hands have been destroyed and the face also is considerably damaged. But the details of rich ornamentation and the graceful curves of her body, which have been accentuated by the *dvibhanga* posture, do not fail to impress.

Above the pillars of the shrine, there is a band carved with seven small panels depicting amorous couples *(mithunas),* but they are now considerably obliterated. Above this there is an unfinished cave which obviously must have been started earlier, but was never finished.

All the figures of the river-goddesses are entirely different, at least stylistically, from those in the Kailas complex and no doubt belong to a different school which has no parallel in Maharashtra. The same holds good in the case of the pillars and pilasters in this shrine. The sculptures are characterised by slender forms with details of ornamentation and other decoration executed in a very intricate manner. The pillars and pilasters too are rather slender in sharp contrast to the massive square columns in the Kailas. The sculptures bear a family resemblance to those in the Pratihara art of North India and it is therefore not unlikely that the shrine of the river-goddess is the handiwork of Pratihara artists. The Pratihara influence is not hard to explain in view of the fact that the Rashtrakuta kings were constantly fighting with the Pratiharas and had defeated them more than once. The Rashtrakuta monarch Govinda III (A.D. 794-814) had won a decisive victory over the Pratiharas in the Ganga valley and it is therefore likely that the king got the shrine of the river-goddess carved to commemorate his victory, probably on the Triveni Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati (which is mythical) at Prayag (Allahabad).

Although Govinda III can be credited with the excavation of the river-goddess chapel, it appears that their worship was already in vogue in the Deccan. The credit goes to Vijayaditya, a Chalukyan monarch who is said to have first brought the images of river-goddesses on their *vahanas* (mounts) to the Chalukyan kingdom from the north while he was still the crown prince. In the Jamalagama copper plate grant issued by him in his first regnal year (A.D. 696-97), he is described as defeating his enemies in northern India between A.D. 681 and 696 and bringing from them a cloth banner bearing Ganga and Yamuna and the pot (*purna-kumbha*) as trophy (11).

THE GALLERIES

Below the Lankeshwar in the north and Paralanka in the south there is a gallery or a sort of corridor extending upto the escarpment at the back and it is joined to the gallery in the eastern escarpment, thus forming a continuous gallery on all three sides of the *garbha-griha* of the Kailas. It is about 14 ft. (4.3 m.) wide and is supported by square massive pillars which are severely plain in sharp contrast to the profuse carving on those in the Kailas. On the wall of the gallery sculptures are carved in panels divided by pilasters which are similar to the pillars. There are twelve panels each in the north and south sides, whereas in the eastern part there are nineteen such panels.

Beginning from the left, that is, on the north side of the gallery, the first panel depicts Ravana offering his heads to Siva (Pl. 68). Ravana was a great devotee of Siva and here we see that he has already offered nine out of his ten heads which are seen around the *linga* below which is Ravana. According to the story, when Ravana was about to cut off the remaining head, the god appeared and prevented him from doing so. In the *Ramayana* (VII, 19) Ravana is described as offering nine heads to Siva and finally the tenth to Brahma as the severest penance. He was about to cut off the tenth head when the god appears and grants the desired boon.

The second panel is divided into two parts of which the upper one has Siva-Parvati sitting; the lower one depicts a male sitting and a female standing. In the next panel are Siva and Parvati and in between them is a Siva *linga;* below is the Nandi (Pl. 69). The panel is of considerable importance from the standpoint of iconography. It is significant that the *lingam* is also shown although Siva himself is represented in the anthropomorphic form. Here Siva and Parvati are both shown carrying the *linga,* Siva with his left and Parvati with her right hand. This is significant in the light of the Virasaiva tradition, according to which the *guru,* in the *diksha* ceremony, hands over the *linga* to the initiated with his left hand because they claim that their preceptor received the *linga* from Siva himself (12).

The fourth panel is similar, only the *linga* is absent; it is however not as crude as the preceding one. In the fifth panel Siva is shown standing with his bull behind him. The next is again Siva and Parvati with a child. The seventh is a standing male figure which has not been identified so far.

In the eighth panel Siva and Parvati are shown sitting. Below can be seen an outline of a person from which it appears that this panel was intended to depict Ravana shaking Kailas, but remained unfinished. In the next, Siva and Parvati are seen sitting and below is the bull. Here Siva probably holds a *vina* in his hands. The tenth panel shows Siva and Parvati playing dice and there are a number of *ganas* near the bull (Pl. 70). The next is a very rare representation of Siva with epic heroes Rama and Lakshmana; the god is obviously granting them his blessings. The last in this gallery is Siva as Markandeyanugraha-murti, that is, the god issuing out of the *lingam,* prevents Yama, the God of Death, from taking the life of Markandeya, a great devotee of Siva (Pl. 71).

EASTERN GALLERY

In this gallery the first panel dipicts Kalyanasundara-murti (Pl. 72), that is, the marriage of Siva and Parvati. Siva is seen holding the hand of Parvati and below is the three-headed Brahma who officiated as the priest at the ceremony. The panel is noteworthy for the bashful charm of Parvati. But the most remarkable feature is that Parvati is seen receiving in her right hand the hand of Siva whose left hand touches the shoulders of Parvati. This is exactly what the *Agamas* prescribe and the artist here seems to have followed the Agamic injunctions (13). After this is the scene in which Siva is killing Andhakasura. Next is Tripurari Siva (Pl. 73) of which a better illustration is that inside the screen wall in the south court. It is followed by Siva and Parvati with Nandi below. Next is a four-armed Lakulisa standing. The sixth in this corridor is the Lingodbhava-murti of which a better sculpture is the one on the western wall of Kailas near the southern staircase. This is followed by Gangadhara-Siva standing with Parvati sitting to his left. The next panel depicts a very rare iconographical form, at least in Western India and the only one of its kind at Ellora (Pl. 74). It is a syncretistic icon combining the two cult gods, Siva and Vishnu into one and hence it is known as Harihara. According to the *Vamana Purana,* Vishnu is once reported to have said that he and Siva were one and that Siva resides in him. This form therefore must have come into being when the conflict between the Saivites and Vaishnavites had been settled and a compromise reached. In the present panel the right side of the figure is that of Siva or Hara, whereas the left one is that of Vishnu or Hari. Hara wears a *jata-mukuta* and holds in his right hand a trident *(trishula);* the object in the other hand, however, is not seen clearly. To his right is the Nandi. The left half is that of Hari, who wears a *kirita-mukuta* and holds in one of his left hands a discus *(chakra)* and a lotus *(padma)* in the other. His mount Garuda is seen on his left. The ninth panel shows Vishnu in worshipful attitude with a devotee on his right. The next is Siva with Nandi. Then there is the three-headed and four-armed Brahma, followed by Siva with Nandi. Next to him again is Siva, but the following one depicts Siva as Bhikshatana-murti (Pl. 75). Then we have Siva dancing, Siva as Bhairava and Siva-Parvati.

The next sculpture again is an extremely rare illustration of one of the Saivite stories according to which Siva tests the love of Parvati for him (Pl. 76). In order to do this he gets himself entrenched in a lotus-pond and Parvati then comes to his rescue. In the panel we see Siva on the left; he is four-armed, holding a trident (*trishula*) in the upper right hand, whereas the lower right is akimbo (*kalyavalambita*). The upper left hand is held in the *vismaya mudrà*, that is, the surprise pose,while the lower left is held by Parvati who is trying to extricate her lord. The figure of Parvati is too small as compared to that of Siva, but even then the details of her ornaments and the graceful curves of her figure, which are accentuated by her *dvibhanga* (double bend) pose testify to the artist's skill.

This panel illustrates a very interesting Puranic story according to which Sati was reborn as Parvati and practised austerities to win Siva as her husband. Siva, wanting to test her resolve, assumes the form of an old decrepit man. He goes to Parvati begging for food who tells him to finish his bath and ablutions and then come for his meals. The old man goes to the river and shouts that he has been caught by a crocodile. Parvati comes but cannot give him her hand which was reserved for Siva. But finally in order to save the old brahmin she offers him her hand in help. The story in the *Skanda Purana* is slightly different. In that Siva has been described as a young *brahmachari* and not an old man. The panel described above seems to follow the description given in the *Skanda Purana* as Siva has been shown in it as a young man. Finally, there is a panel showing Siva and Parvati.

There are twelve more panels in the southern gallery starting with Ardhanarishvara. This is followed by Siva with Nandi. Next to this is Brahma trying to uproot a *lingam* (Pl. 77). Nrisimha killing Hiranyakashipu is shown in the next panel. The god is seated with the demon in his lap and is about to tear out his entrails. The earlier ones, on the *Nandi-mandapa* and the temple walls, depict both of them standing for a combat. Next is Vishnu on Shesha, the serpent.

The next panel illustrates the famous story according to which Krishna protected the life and property of the residents of Gokul by lifting Mount Govardhana on his finger. In this panel the god is shown with four arms with two of which he has lifted the mountain. Vishnu's incarnation as a dwarf (Vamana) who covered the three worlds in three strides — hence his appellation Trivikrama — is carved in the following panel (Pl. 78). The next depicts Vishnu on his mount Garuda who is shown in the human form, but with wings (Pl. 79). Vishnu's boar (Varaha) incarnation is depicted in the following panel (Pl. 80). The god is said to have rescued the Mother Earth from the deluge. In the next panel we see Lord Krishna subduing the serpent Kaliya, illustrating the famous *Kaliya-mardana* story (Pl. 81). Here he is shown trampling over the heads of the giant snake. According to the story, Kaliya was a huge cobra in the waters of the Yamuna at Mathura. He was an extremely poisonous snake and had spoiled the water of the river. Once Krishna, as a child, was playing with his friends and their ball fell into the river. Krishna entered the waters to retrieve it, but Kaliya attacked him. Krishna then subdued the monster snake. The next panel depicts Vishnu in a standing posture, with four arms holding *shankha* (conch-shell), *chakra* (wheel), *gada* (mace) and *padma* (lotus) (Pl. 82). This last panel contains an image of the goddess Annapurna (Pl. 83).

All these forty-three sculptures in the gallery are heavy, stumpy, and appear almost lifeless in utter contrast to the vigorous and vibrant forms in the Kailas. In all the multitude of articulate gods and goddesses, these images in the gallery look almost dumb. They are rendered in a very crude manner and there is not much visible attempt at executing the details. In fact, the whole gallery seems to be the work of amateurs. Stylistically they are far removed from anything in the Kailas complex and can be dated to the last phase of activity at the Kailas. There is no doubt that the entire gallery is an afterthought and may have been added perhaps at the fag end of the Rashtrakuta rule at the end of 9th or the earlier half of the tenth century A.D. when the Śilaharas were trying to establish their sovereignty. This was the time when structural temples began to be built in the Deccan and the rock art was on the decline.

The Kailas in the Mediaeval Period

6

Unlike Ajanta and many other cave-temples, the Kailas was not lost to be later rediscovered. It was well known in the mediaeval period which explains its destruction at the hands of infidels. The great saint-poet of Maharashtra, Dnyaneshwar, who lived in the 13th century A.D. hailed from Apegaon which is not far from Ellora. He probably had visited the Kailas for in one of his verses he describes that a temple was built in such a way that work began from the top (1). This obviously has a reference to the Kailas which is the only one of its kind in Maharashtra. In A.D. 1296, Allauddin Khalji invaded the Deccan, defeated the Yadavas and wanted to abduct the Gujarat princesses Devaldevi and Kamaldevi, who were staying as guests of the Yadava king Ramraja at the fort-capital of Devgiri (present Daulatabad). They had been to the Kailas to offer worship but were captured there inside the temple by the soldiers of Khalji. In mediaeval Marathi literature, there are innumerable references to the Kailas and many legends about it as will be discussed later. Later still, many foreign travellers also visited Ellora and must have seen the Kailas (2).

Although the rock-temple is commonly known as the Kailas, it seems that in mediaeval times it was popularly known as Manikeshwar and perhaps earlier still as Ghrishneshwar, and was regarded as one of the twelve *jyotirlingas*. The Baroda copper plate grant refers to the edifice as "Kailas" and compares it with the Himalayan abode of Siva, describing it as *svayambhu* implying thereby its divine character. Consequently it came to be worshipped as a *jyotirlinga* (3). But the present temple, known as Ghrishneshwar, is a late mediaeval structure built by Ahilyabai Holkar (A.D. 1725-95), a pious princess of Indore State. It is worshipped even today by Hindus who believe that it is a *jyotirlinga*. But since the structure is so late in date and there are no traces of earlier remains, it is hard to believe that it is the original *jyotirlinga*. It should be mentioned in this connection that the *Siva Purana* (*Dhyana Samhita, Adhyaya* 38) gives the name Ghushmesha as one of the *jyotirlingas,* but its location has not been stated. From the similarity of the names, however, it has been taken to be the same as Ghrishneshwar at Ellora.

The legendary account regarding the existence of a *jyotirlinga* at Ellora is indicative of the derivation of the name Ghushmesha. It is said that a certain Brahmin, Sudharma by name, had two wives who were sisters. The younger wife, Ghushma, was hated and envied by the elder wife of the Brahmin. She killed the son of Ghushma and threw the dead body into the lake on the outskirts of the village (4). Ghushma was a pious devotee of Siva and by his grace the boy was brought back to life again, and Ghushma prayed to the god to forgive her elder sister for the heinous crime. Siva, pleased by her virtuous behaviour and her devotion, stayed there in the form of a *jyotirlinga* acceding to Ghushma's request. This explains the name of the god Ghushmesha.

We cannot test the historicity of this Puranic story. Yet from the similarity between the names, Ghushmesha can be identified. It is highly likely that the Kailas itself was the original *jyotirlinga* even in those days as is clear from the very name, Ghrishneshwar. The word is derived from the Sanskrit root *ghrsh* and its meaning is "to polish", to grind, to crush, to rub". Thus the name Ghrishneshwar implies the shrine of the god which is polished by chiselling and crushing the rock. The Kailas must have received this appellation on account of its rock-cut nature. There need therefore be no doubt that the Kailas was the ancient *jyotirlinga* of the Puranic legend. Al Masudi, the famous Arab geographer, who is the first to make a reference to the Ellora cave-temples, alludes to them as being a celebrated place of pilgrimage. And it should be remembered that the present temple of Ghrishneshwar did not exist then.

There is considerable literary evidence of the mediaeval period which refers to this rock-temple as Manikeshwar cave-temple, because it was built by a certain queen Manikavati of the king of Elapura (5). The story goes that a certain king of Alajapura (modern Ellichpur in Amaravati District, Maharashtra) had committed a certain sin in his previous birth, and as a result, was suffering from some incurable disease. Curiously enough, the king suffered from the disease only during the night whereas during daytime he was his normal healthy self. Once the king went on a hunting expedition to Mahisamala (Mhaisamal near Ellora) and bathed in the tank at that place. After the bath he found that he was cured of the disease probably because the sin which he had committed in his previous birth had been washed off. The queen, who had accompanied the king, worshipped god Ghrishneshwar at Elapura (Ellora) and took a religious vow that if the king was cured, she would build a temple in the honour of Siva. Naturally, therefore, when the king was cured, she requested the king to build the temple immediately. She decided to observe fast until she saw the *sikhara* (tower) of the temple. The king agreed, but no architect on earth would have been able to build the temple in such a short time. The king summoned many artists, but they all said that it would take at least sixteen months to build a temple complete with its *sikhara*. There was, however, one who agreed to do the job. He was one Kokasa, a resident of Paithan near Aurangabad (ancient Pratishthan), but he would not start his day without a bath in the Godavari. He was summoned and the king told him his predicament. Kokasa accepted the challenge and assured the king that the queen could take the *darshana* of the *shikhara* within a week's time, Kokasa then began to carve out the rock-temple which naturally had to begin from the top. He completely carved out the *shikhara* within a week and saved the royal couple from their predicament. The temple was then named after the queen as Manikeshwar and the king established a settlement at the site which was named after him as Elapura (Modern Ellora).

THE MASTER-ARTIST KOKASA

Although the Baroda copper plate grant refers in glowing terms to the achievement of the master-artist of the Kailas, it does not record his name. It has generally been thought, because of the striking similarity between the Kailas and the Virupaksha temple at Pattadkal, that in all probability the very same artist who built the later edifice was responsible for the carving out of the former. But the Virupaksha temple inscription, as already seen, does make a mention of its architect, one *Sutradhari* Gunda, who has been described as the greatest architect of South India. If he had been entrusted with the work at the Kailas, his name certainly would have occurred in some inscription in the temple. That not being the case, we can be certain that Gunda was not the *Silpin* (Master-craftsman) of the Kailas. Mediaeval Marathi literature, as stated above, mentions the name of one Kokasa, a *vadhiya,* i.e., a carpenter (*Vardhakin* Sk, *badhai* Hindi, *vadhiya* Marathi) who has been described as an incarnation of Visvakarma. Kokasa was an inhabitant of Paithan but in one place he is said to have been living at Puntambe (Taluq Rahuri, Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra). This indicates that the name of the master-artist of the Kailas traditionally did survive even after five or six centuries. It should also be mentioned in this connection that there are some inscriptional records in Central India datable to the 11th to 13th centuries A.D. which mention the names of some sculptors who were born in the illustrious family of Kokasa (6). It is therefore not unlikely that the family or the successors of Kokasa later shifted their activity to Central India where they found work commensurate with their skill.

EPILOGUE

The foregoing account of the Kailas amply makes it clear that it is the grandest achievement of the ancient Indian artist — a unique combination of architecture, sculpture, and painting. Time and man could not destroy it; it is immortal. Everything about it is gigantic: its size equal to that of the Parthenon in Athens, its sculptures massive and bursting forth out of 'their frames with superhuman energy, its painting still retaining its variegated colours. The very idea of carving a temple in living rock was no doubt novel, and although modest monolithic shrines were carved at Mahabalipuram under the Pallavas, they are so small that they look like toy shrines before the Kailas. The inspiration of rock-cut shrines need not have come from the Pallavas; Maharashtra already had a glorious tradition of rock art for a thousand years before the Kailas. The mighty Rashtrakuta emperors were engaged in perpetual struggle with the Palas in the east and the Pratiharas in the north, just as in the mediaeval age Marathas were fighting with the Moguls and obviously had no time for the finer things of life. There is no Rashtrakuta art like the Gupta art, for outside the Kailas there is hardly anything that can be labelled as Rashtrakuta.

The Rashtrakutas were staunch worshippers of Siva and great patrons of Puranic religion. It is their intense devotion which could create an edifice of the magnitude of the Kailas which is unique in form and unsurpassed in splendour. It is often said that the Hindus conceived like giants and executed like a jeweller. No one is better qualified than the Rashtrakuta artists for this acclaim. Only they could plan and execute such a colossus which equals in size the great Parthenon of Athens. The Kailas is perhaps larger for it is one and half times the height of the Parthenon. Therefore it is not only the most stupendous work in the entire range of Indian art but is unrivalled. No praise can be adequate to describe its grandeur. Perhaps we can conclude with the apt remarks of Percy Brown: "The Kailas is an illustration of one of those rare occasions when men's minds, hearts and the hands work in unison towards the consummation of a supreme ideal (7). It was the Kailas which later served as a model for Chhota Kailas Cave XXX in the Jaina group at Ellora itself, which, however, is much smaller, but being unfinished it conveys a good idea of how the Kailas must have been excavated. Similarly, the Siva temple at Kalagumalai in Tamil Nadu is a tinier edition of the Kailas (8).

References and Notes

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3. Ibid., p. 86.
4. "The Excavation of Cave 16, Ellora — Before the Kailasanatha," (unpublished).
5. An inscription in the Virupaksha temple records that it was built by *Sutradhari* Gunda, the greatest architect (*silpin*) of the southern country, for Lokamahadevi, the queen of Vikramaditya II of the Badami Chalukyas, in commemoration of his conquest of Kanchi (*Indian Antiquary,* Vol. X, p. 162) whereas a copper plate grant of Kirtivarman II, son of Vikramaditya II, mentions that the latter was highly impressed with the sculptures in the Rajasimheshwar temple at Kanchi. He therefore made lavish gifts to the temple and overlaid some sculptures with gold (*South Indian Inscriptions,* I, p. 147).
6. *Ajanta to Ellora* (Ann Arbor, Michigan), pp. 1-10.
7. *The Art and Architecture of India — Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 186.
8. Walter M. Spink has given an excellent account of the process of excavation of a cave-temple, basing his observations on Cave 24 at Ajanta which, being an unfinished excavation, furnishes interesting clues. See his "The Splendours of Indra's Crown. Study of Mahayana Development at Ajanta," *Jr. of the Royal Society of Arts,* Vol. CXXII, No. 5219 (Oct. 1974), pp. 751-53.
9. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (*Buddhist and Hindu*) (Bombay, 1971), p. 74.
10. Op. cit., p. 107.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. It should be noted that the Baroda copper plate grant, which so vividly describes the grandeur of the Kailas, was issued in A.D. 812-13. This would imply that the entire temple complex except the shrines in the northern and southern escarpments and the gallery at the back was completed long before the close of the 8th century A.D. See *Indian Antiquary,* Vol. XII (1883), pp. 228-30.
14. Op. cit., pp. 95 and 107.
15. Henry Cousens, *Chalukyan Architecture* (Calcutta, 1926), p. 63.
16. M. N. Deshpande, "Rock-cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan," *Ancient India,* No. 15 (1959), p. 74, Pl. L-A.
17. Cousens, op. cit., p. 62, Pl. XLV. The near total absence of lion in the Virupaksha temple was due, according to Cousens, to its being the royal emblem of the Pallavas who were the enemies of the Chalukyas.
18. Op. cit., p. 92.
19. Ibid.
20. Op. cit., p 92.
21. *Indian Antiquary,* Vol. 40 (1911), pp. 237 ff; Vol. XII (1883), pp. 228ff.; *Epigraphia Indica,* Vol. IV, pp. 337 ff.
22. A. S. Altekar, *The Rashtrakutas and Their*

Times (Poona, 1934), pp 29-41.
Kirtivarman was ruling as late as A.D. 757, that is, three years after the last known date of Dantidurga and one year before the first known date of Krishna I, and hence the final defeat of the Chalukyan king may have been the achievement of Krishna I.

23. *Indian Antiquary,* Vol. X, p. 162; *South Indian Inscriptions,* I, p. 147.
24. Cousens, op. cit., Pl. XLVI.
25. Ibid., pl. XLVII.
26. ASWI, V, Pl. XXIX, 3.
27. Cousens, op. cit., Pl. XLVII.
28. Ibid.
29. Op. cit., p. 94.
30. Op. cit., p. 99.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., Figs. 76-81.
33. See K. R. Srinivasan in A. Ghosh (ed), *Jaina Art and Architecture,* Vol. I (New Delhi, 1974), p. 188.
34. H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia* (New York, 1955), Pls. 242-43.
35. Ibid., Pls. 219, 243 and 246.
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3. Jamkhedkar, op. cit.
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5. K. R. Srinivasan, "The Pallava Architecture of South India," *Ancient India,* No. 14 (1958), Pl. LI.B.
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8. *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Periods),* p. 75.
9. See C. Sivaramamurti, *Sources of History Illumined by Literature* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 141.
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Ch. 4 — THE KAILAS TEMPLE

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3. "Ravana in the Kailasa Temple at Ellora, "*Jr. of the Ganganatha Jha Res. Inst.,* Vol. VIII (1950), p. 133.
4. G. B. Deglurkar, "Identification of the Ramayana Scenes from the Kailasa at Ellora," a paper read at the Seminar on the Rashtrakutas, Bangalore, 1977.
5. Henry Cousens, *The Chalukyan Architecture,* (Calcutta, 1926), pp. 62-65.
6. Devangana Desai, op. cit.
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14. *Studies in Early Indian Painting* (Bombay, 1973), p. 25.
15. A. S. Altekar, *Rashtrakutas and Their Times,* pp. 276-77.
16. Burgess and Indraji, op. cit., p. 97.
17. Ibid.
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19. Op. cit., p. 26.
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3. Ibid.
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Ch. 6 — KAILAS IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

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Glossary of Technical Terms

agra-mandapa	Frontal portico
akshamala	rosary
antarala	antechamber
ardha-mandapa	side porch
atibhanga	completely flexed
chamara-dharini	fly-whisk bearer
chhatra	parasole
damaru	small, hour-glass shaped drum
deva-koshtha	niche
dikpala	guardian deity
dvarapala	door-keeper
dvibhanga	double bend
gajathara	row of elephants on the plinth of a temple
gana	dwarf
garbha-griha	shrine cell, sanctum sanctorum
ghata-pallava	vase and foliage
gopura	main gateway; the storeyed structure over the entrance through enclosure wall.
jyotirlinga	phallus in the form of a flame
jata-juta, or jata-mukuta	matted locks
kakshasana	bench
kalasha	finial
kapota	overhanging eave
karana	compartment
khadga	broad sword
kichaka	dwarf
kirti-mukha	a motif depicting demon's face
kudu	miniature arch; an arched opening
linga	phallus

makara-dhvaja	The ensign of Kama, the god of love, marked with crocodile
makara-torana	an arch issuing out of the mouths of crocodiles, one on either side
mandapa	Hall
mithuna	an amourous couple
mukha-mandapa	frontal portico
nandi-mandapa	Pavilion of Nandi, Siva's bull
navaranga-mandapa	a hall divided into nine compartments formed by six pillars
padmasana	sitting cross-legged with soles of feet touching each other
prabha-valaya	halo
pradakshina-patha	circumambulatory path
prakara	enclosure wall
pralaya	doomsday
sabha-mandapa	hall for congregation
sama-bhanga	straight
sapta-matrikas	Seven Mother Goddesses
shakti	consort
shala-shikhara	tower of wagon-vaulted roof
shardula	mythical lion
shikhara	tower
tribhanga	triple bend
tri-tala	three storeyed
trishula	trident
vamanika	a female dwarf
vyala	mythical animal; leonine figure

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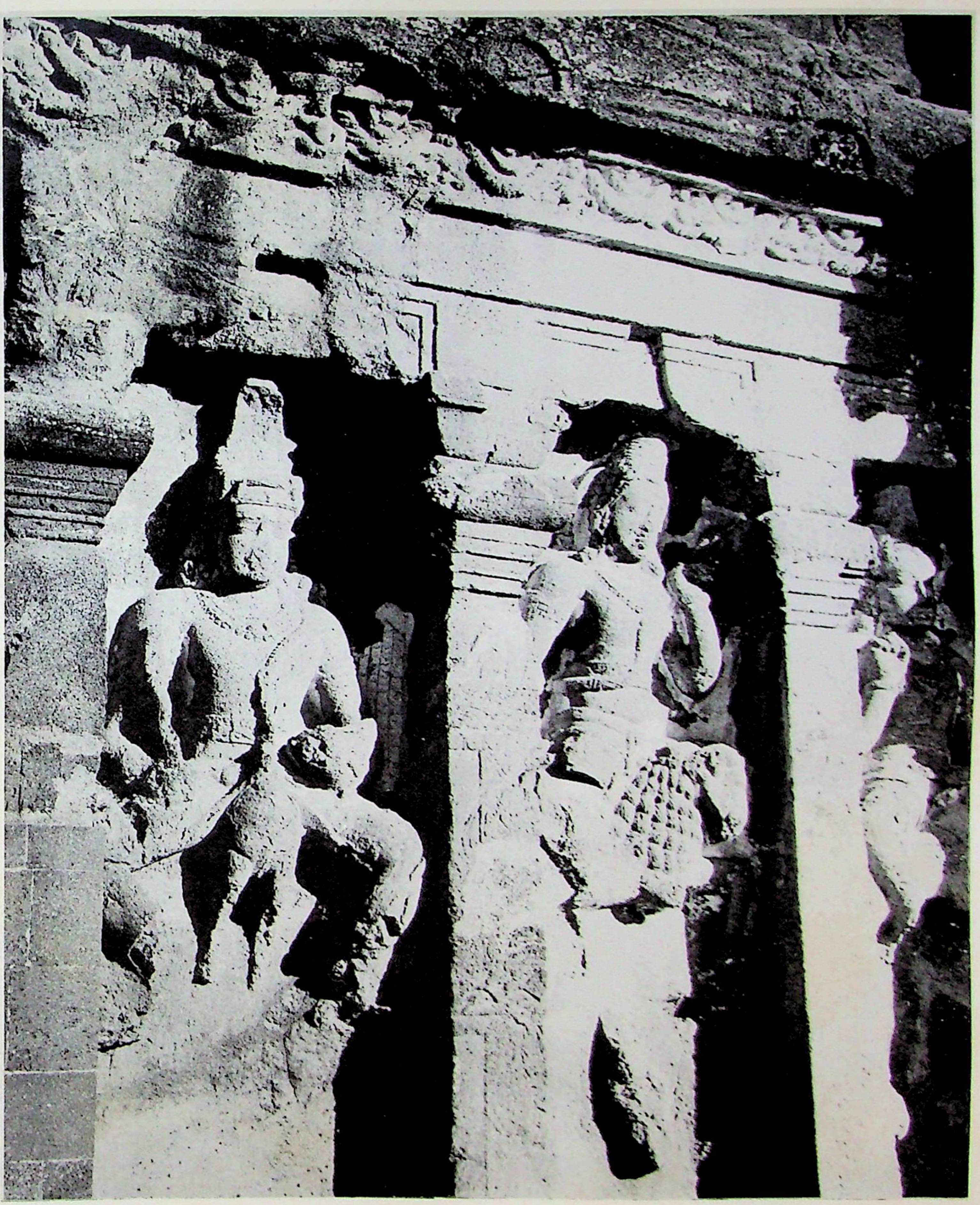
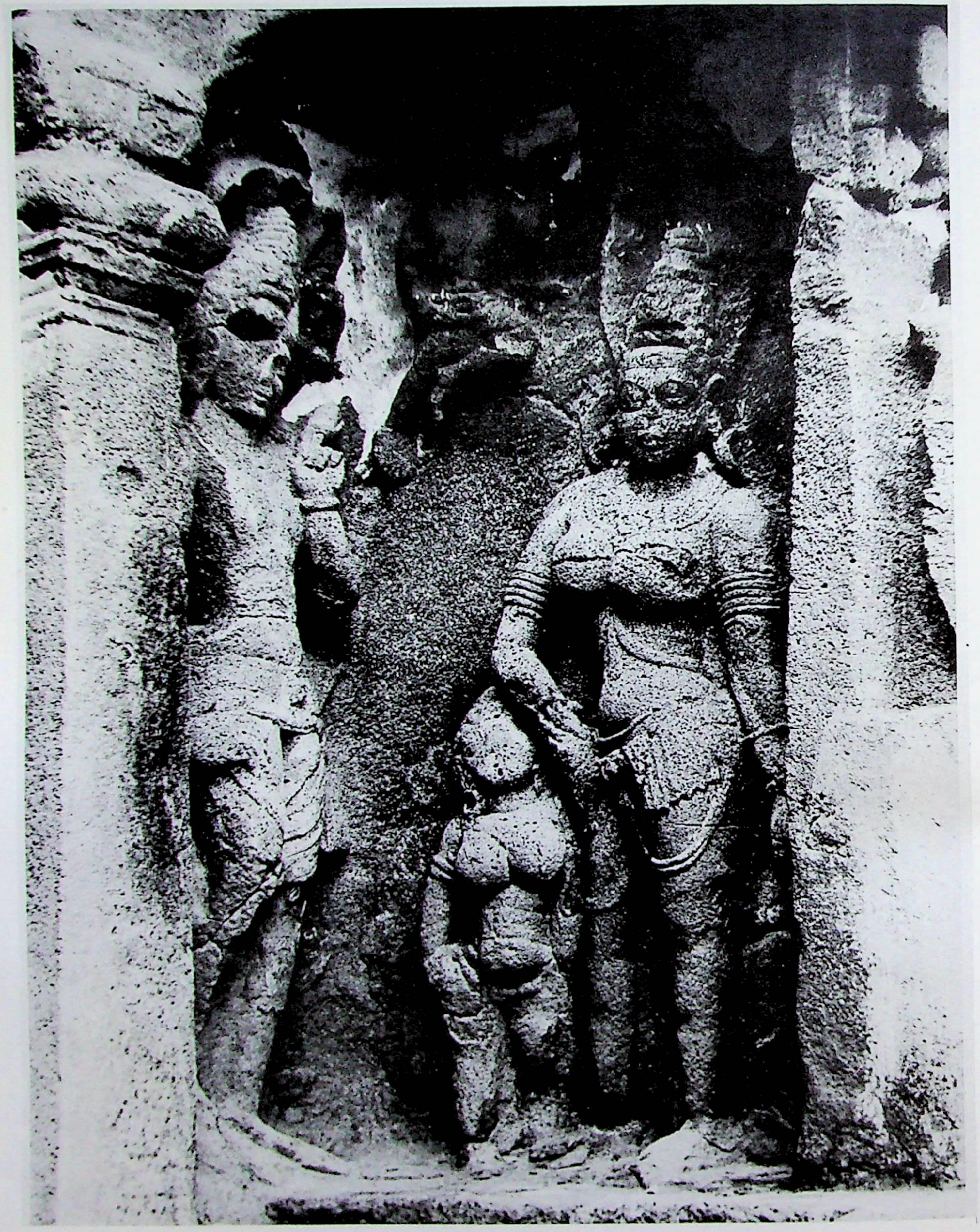
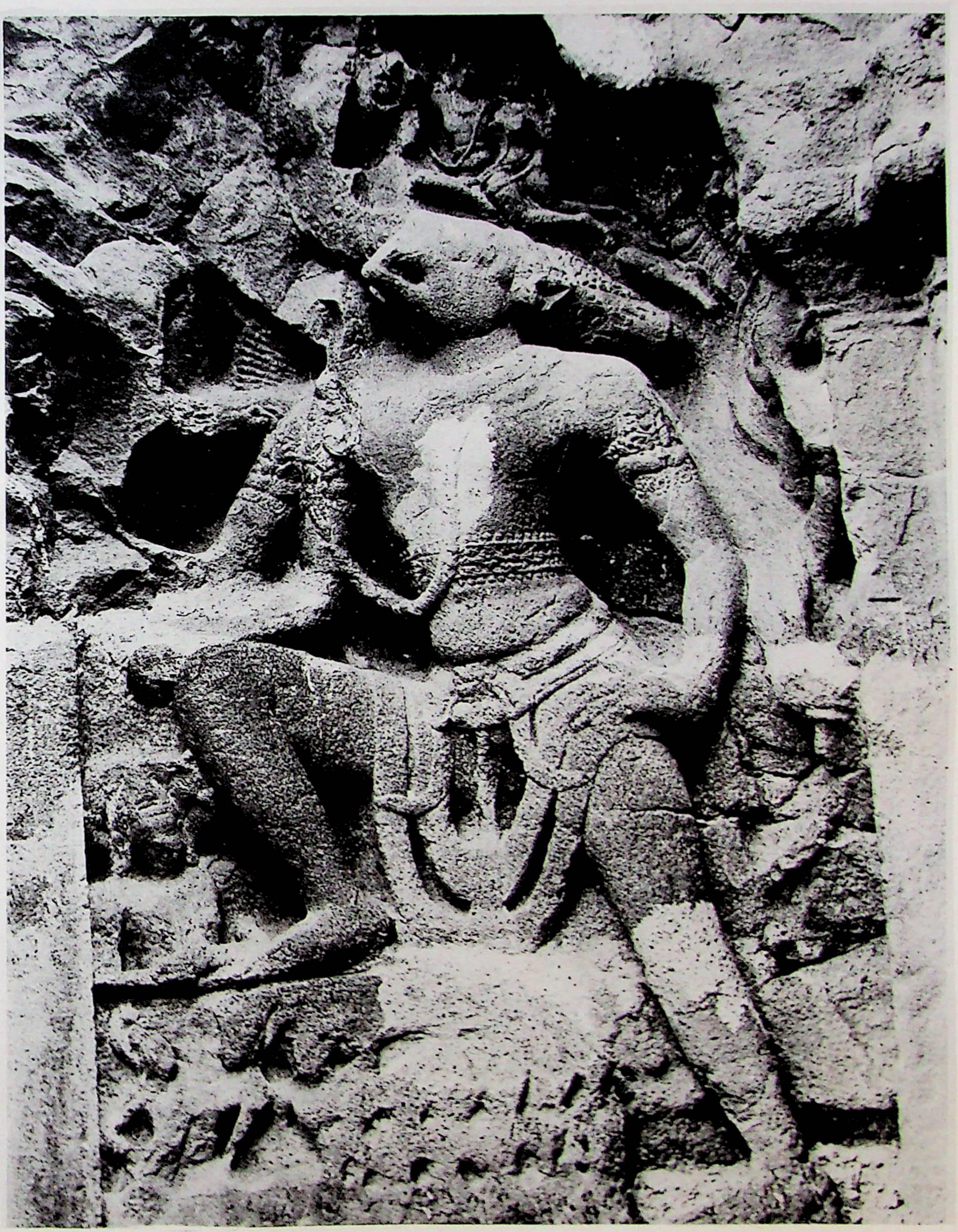


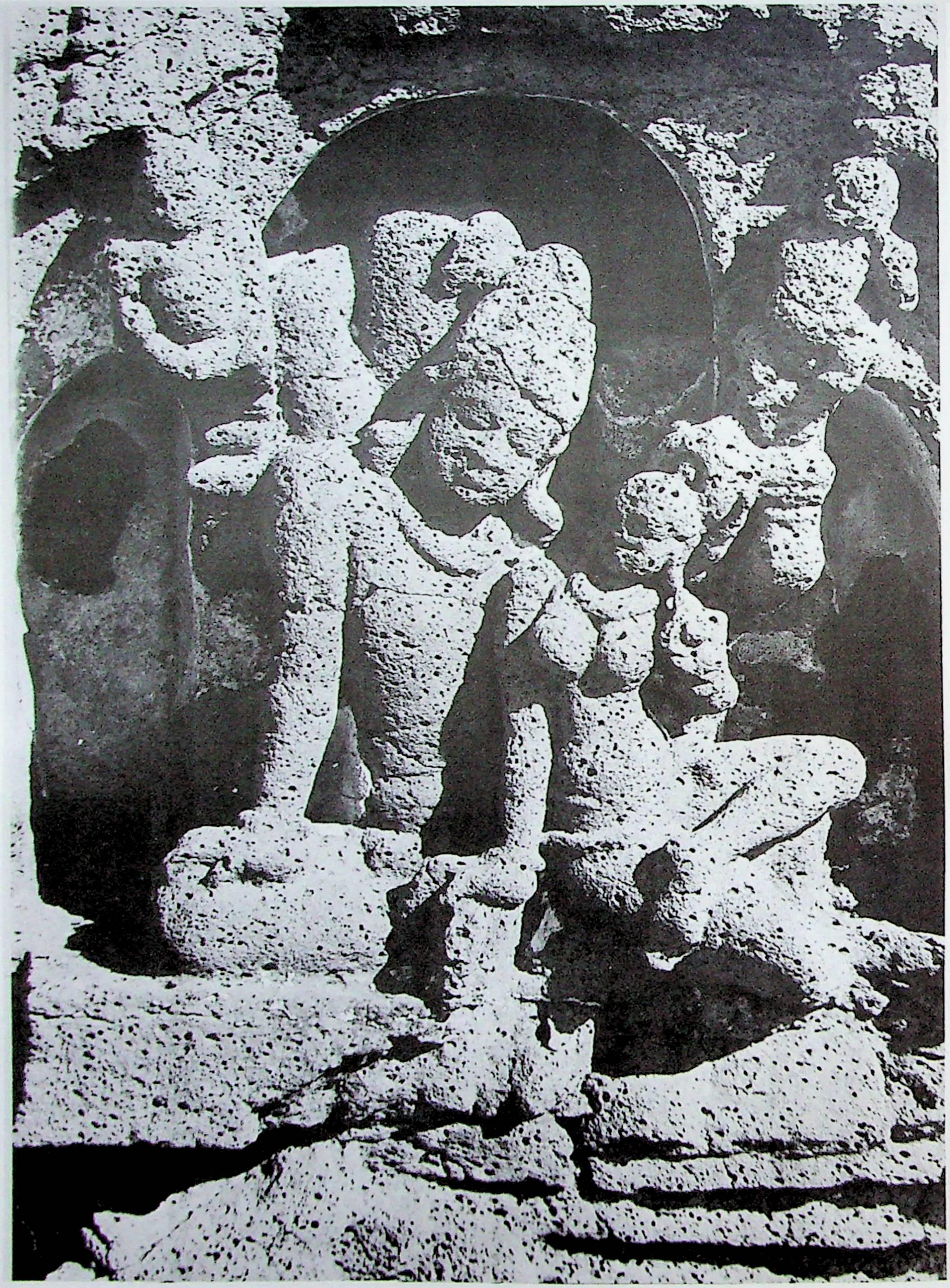
1. Guardian deities Vayu and Agni on the front of enclosure wall.



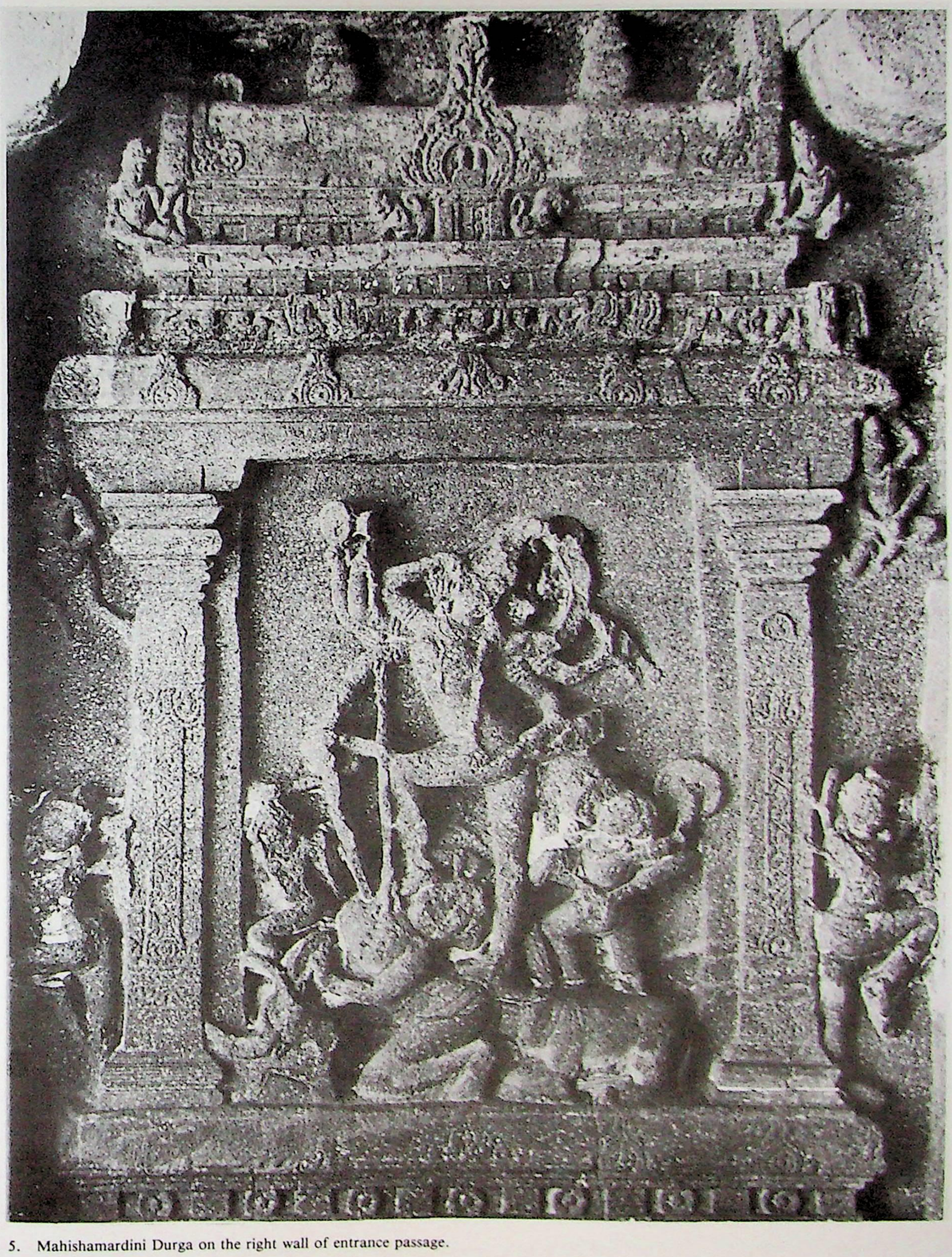
2. Naga king and queen on the front of enclosure wall.



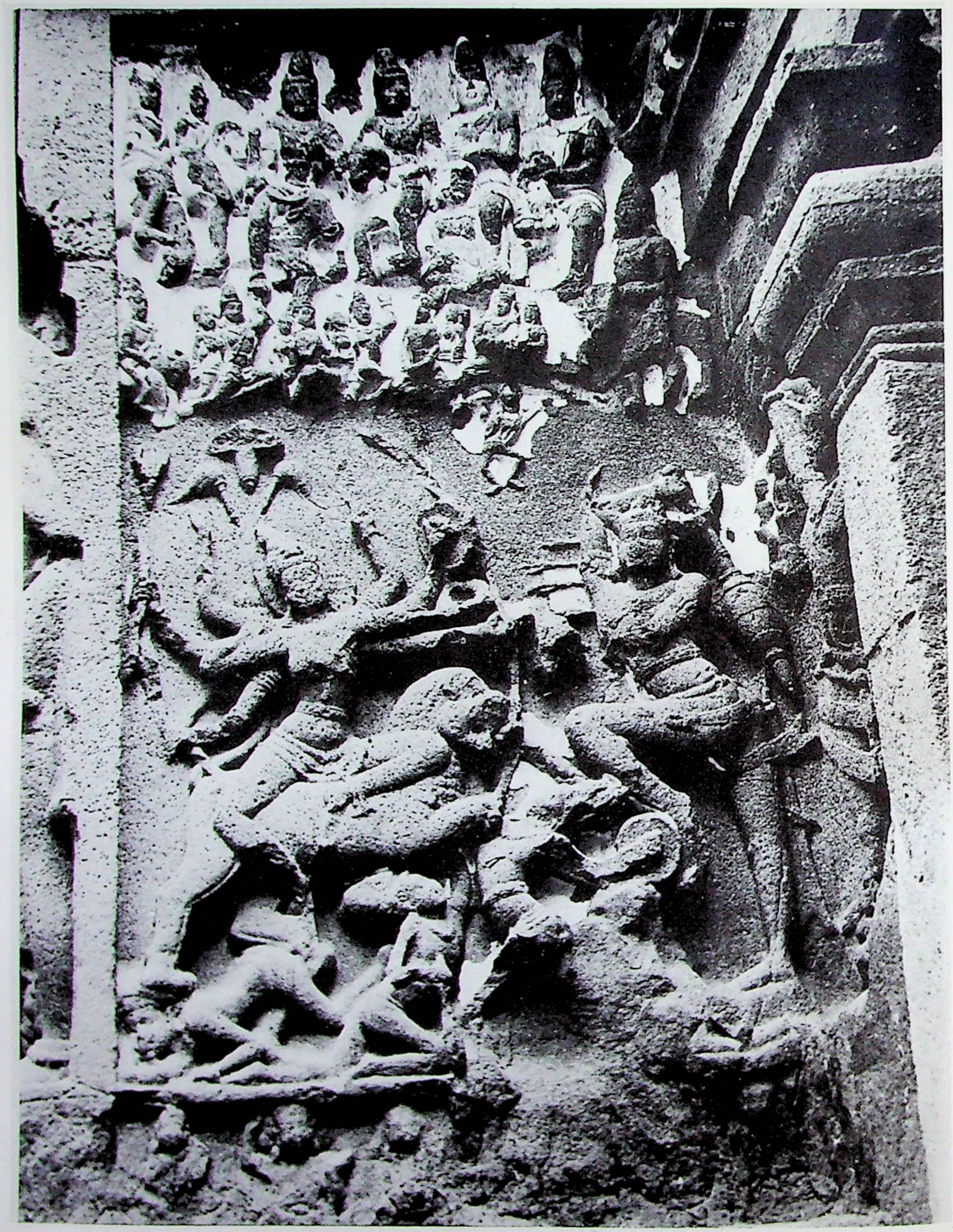
3. Boar incarnation (Varaha) of Vishnu on the front of enclosure wall.



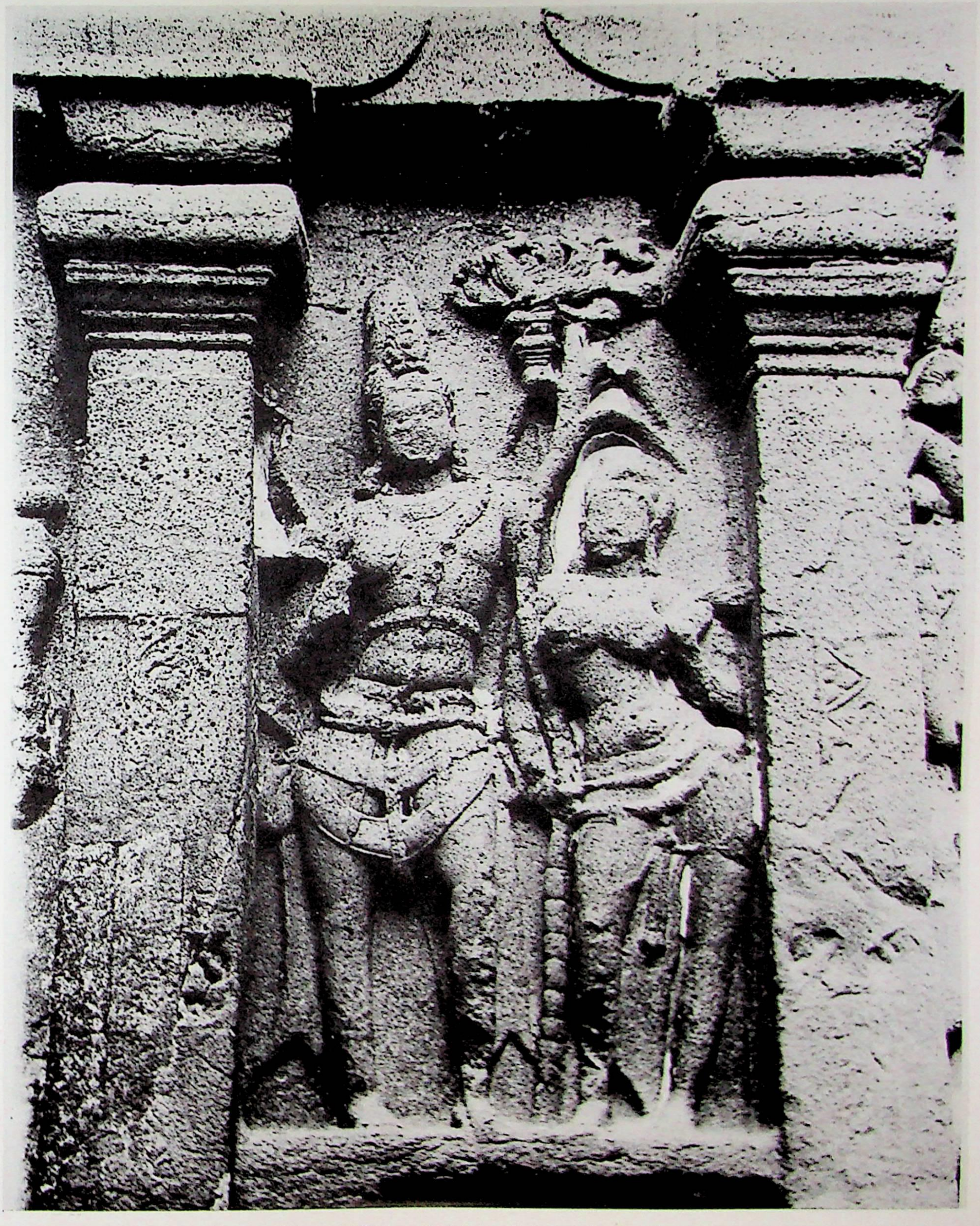
4. Siva carrying *linga,* with Parvati, on the *gopura.*



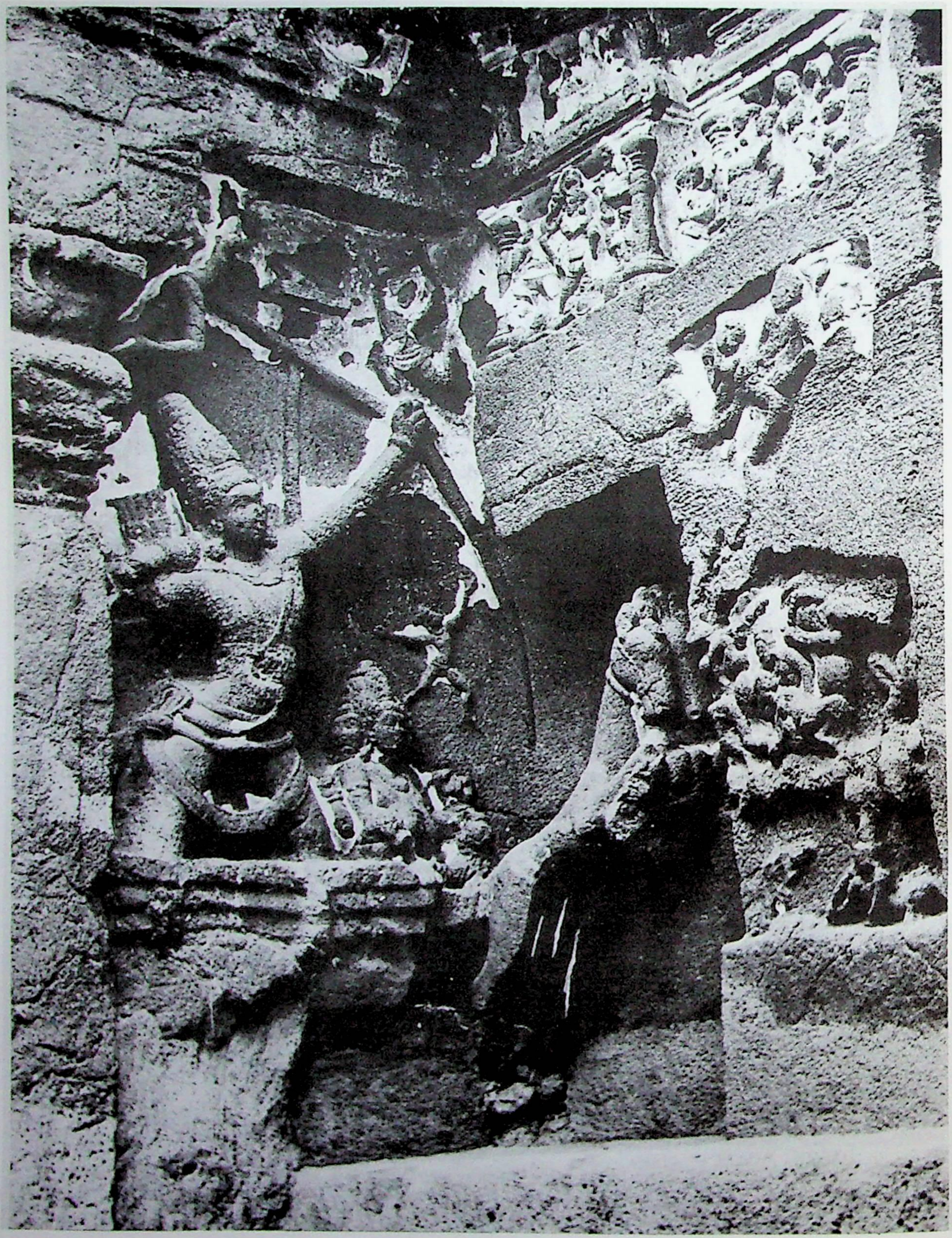
5. Mahishamardini Durga on the right wall of entrance passage.



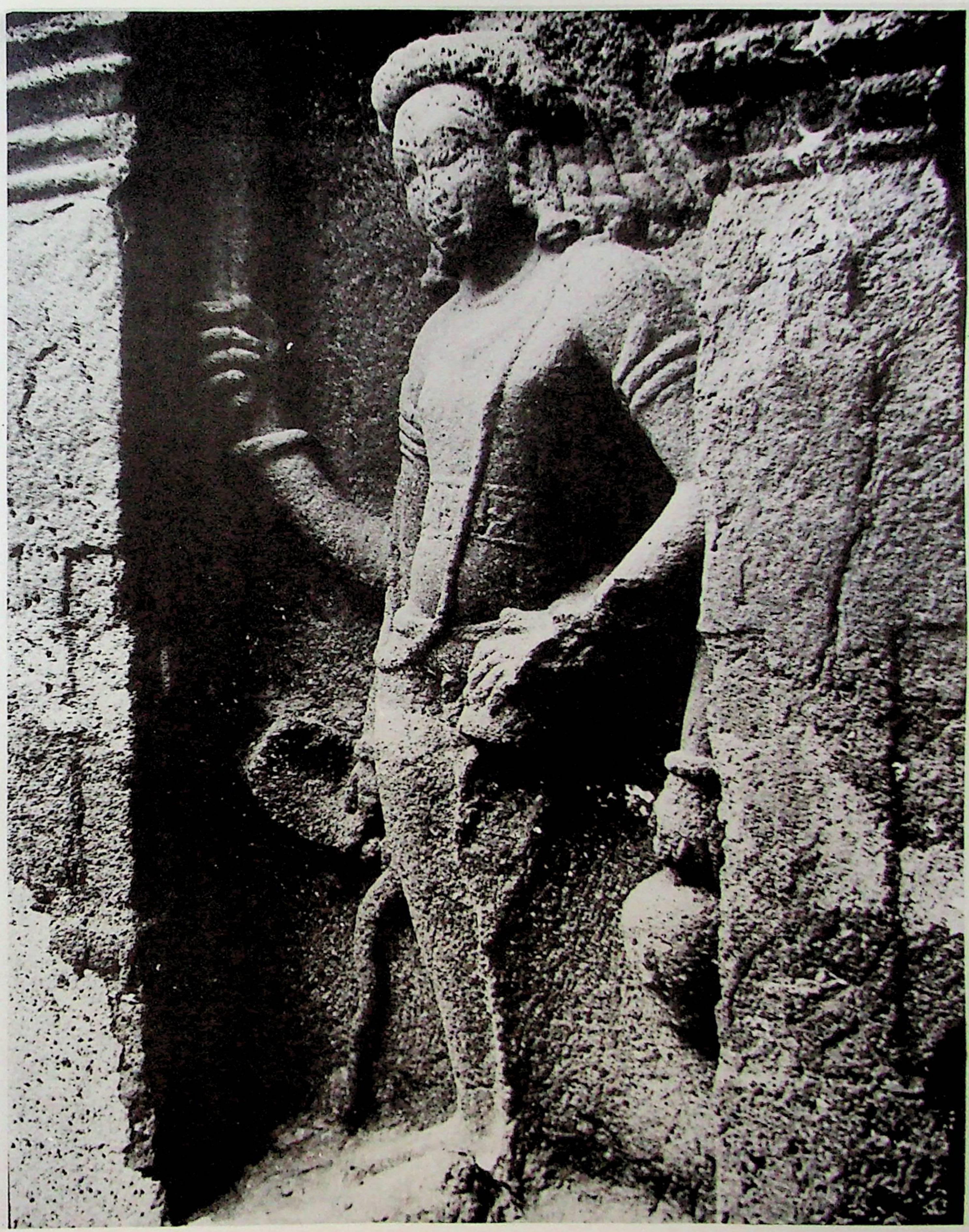
6. Mahishamardini Durga on the interior of enclosure wall.



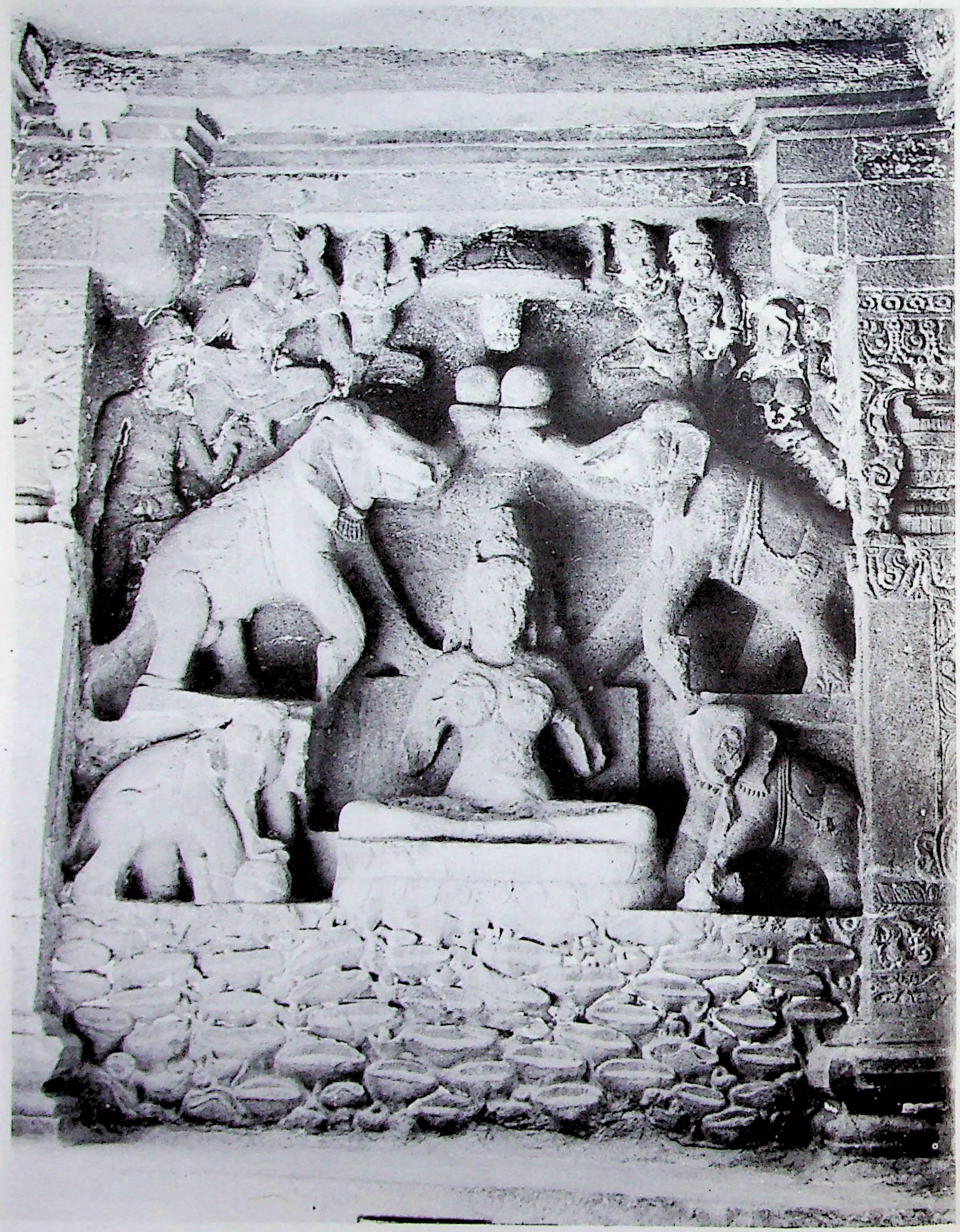
7. Kama or Madana, god of love, and his consort Rati, on the interior of south enclosure wall.



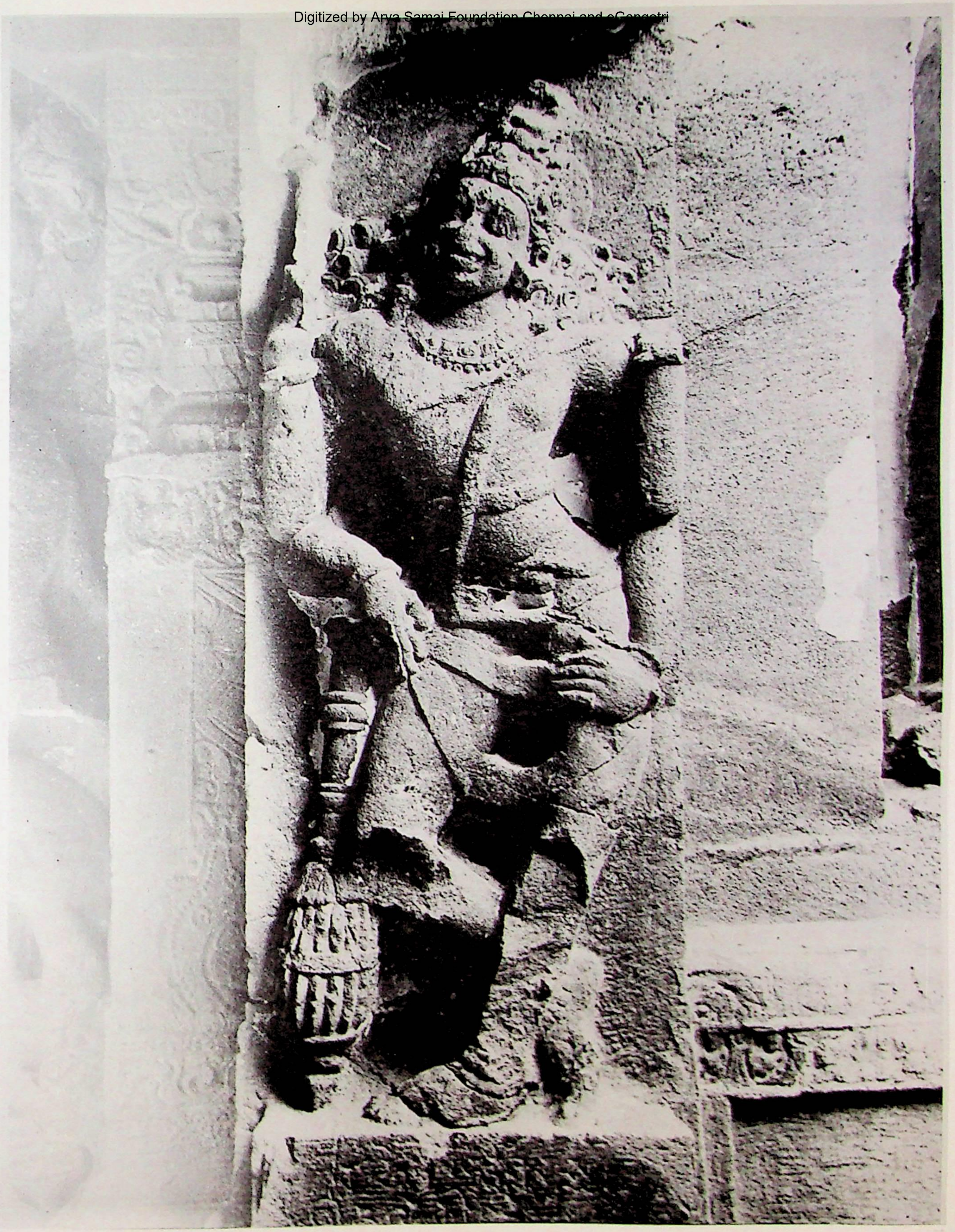
8. Tripurari Siva on the interior of enclosure wall.



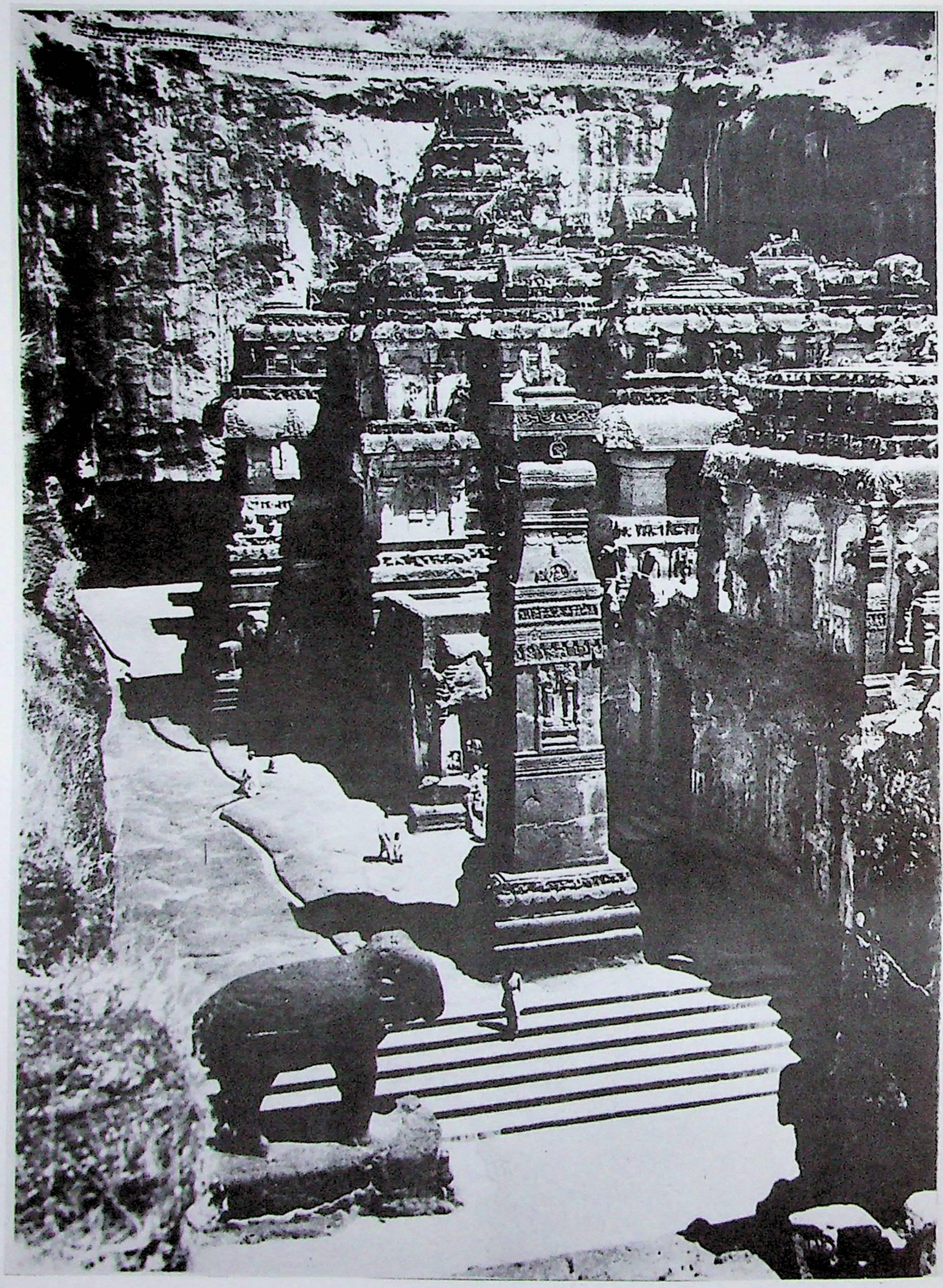
9. Siva as Bhairava on the interior of enclosure wall.



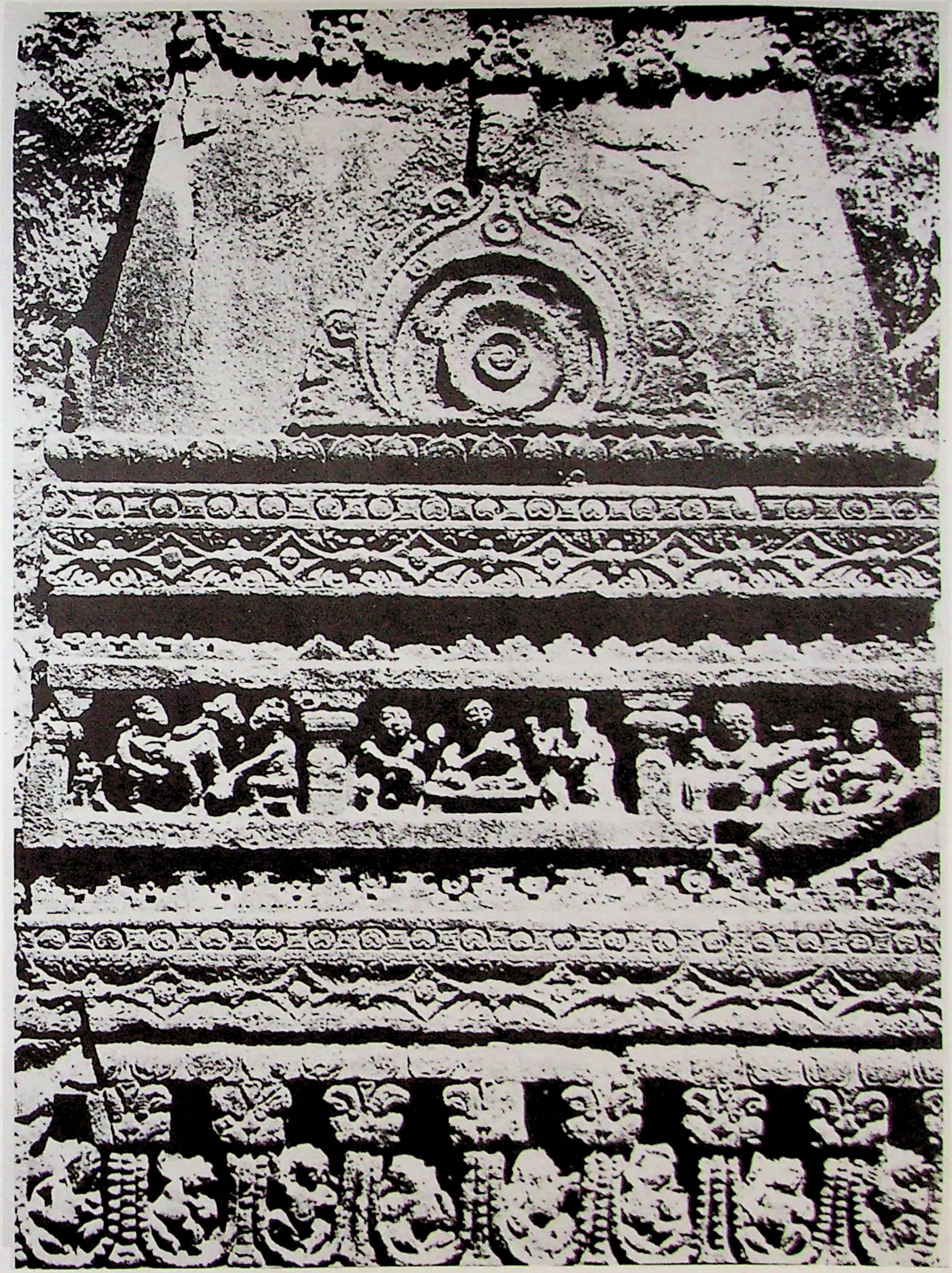
10. Gajalakshmi near the entrance



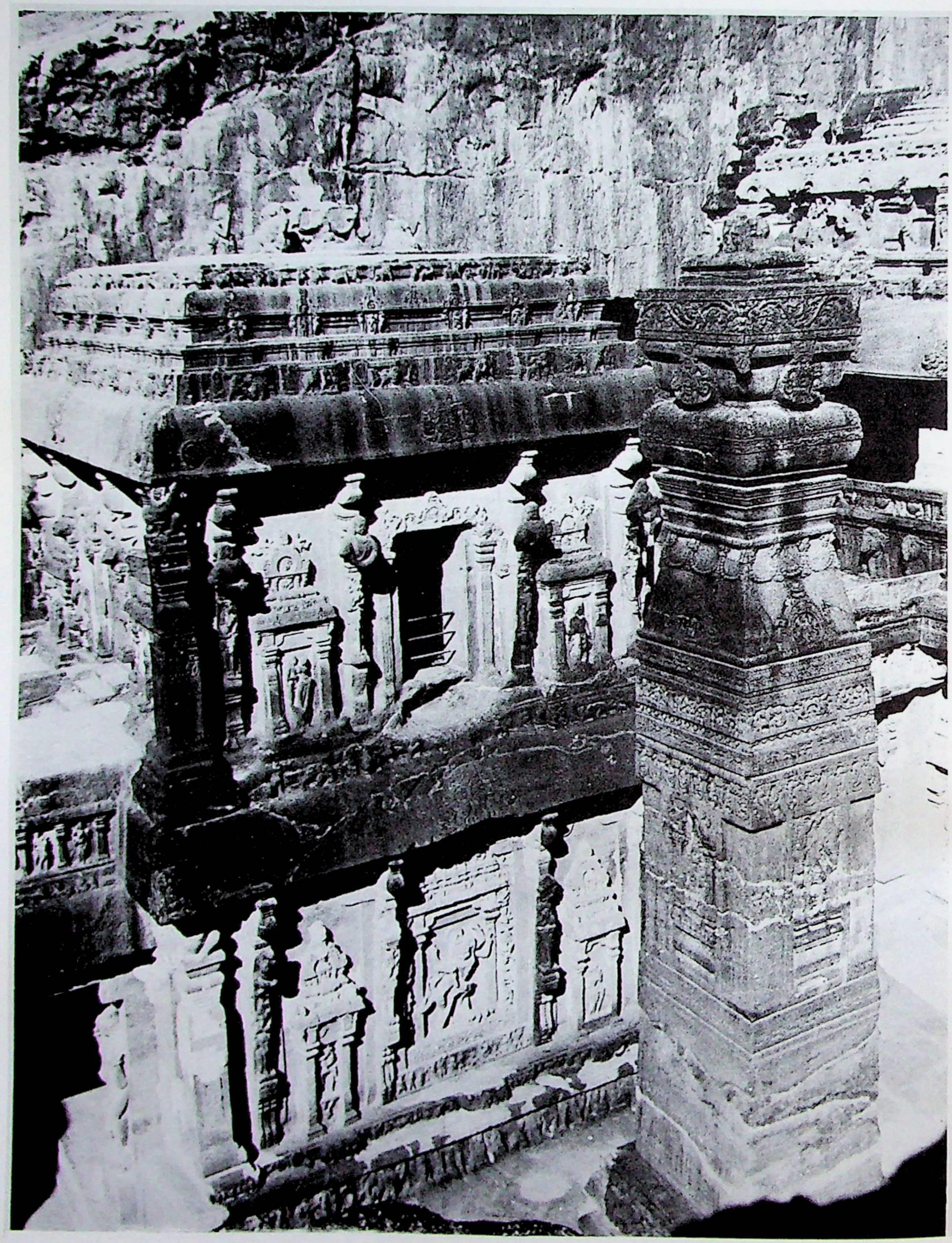
11. Guardian door-keeper of Gajalakshmi.



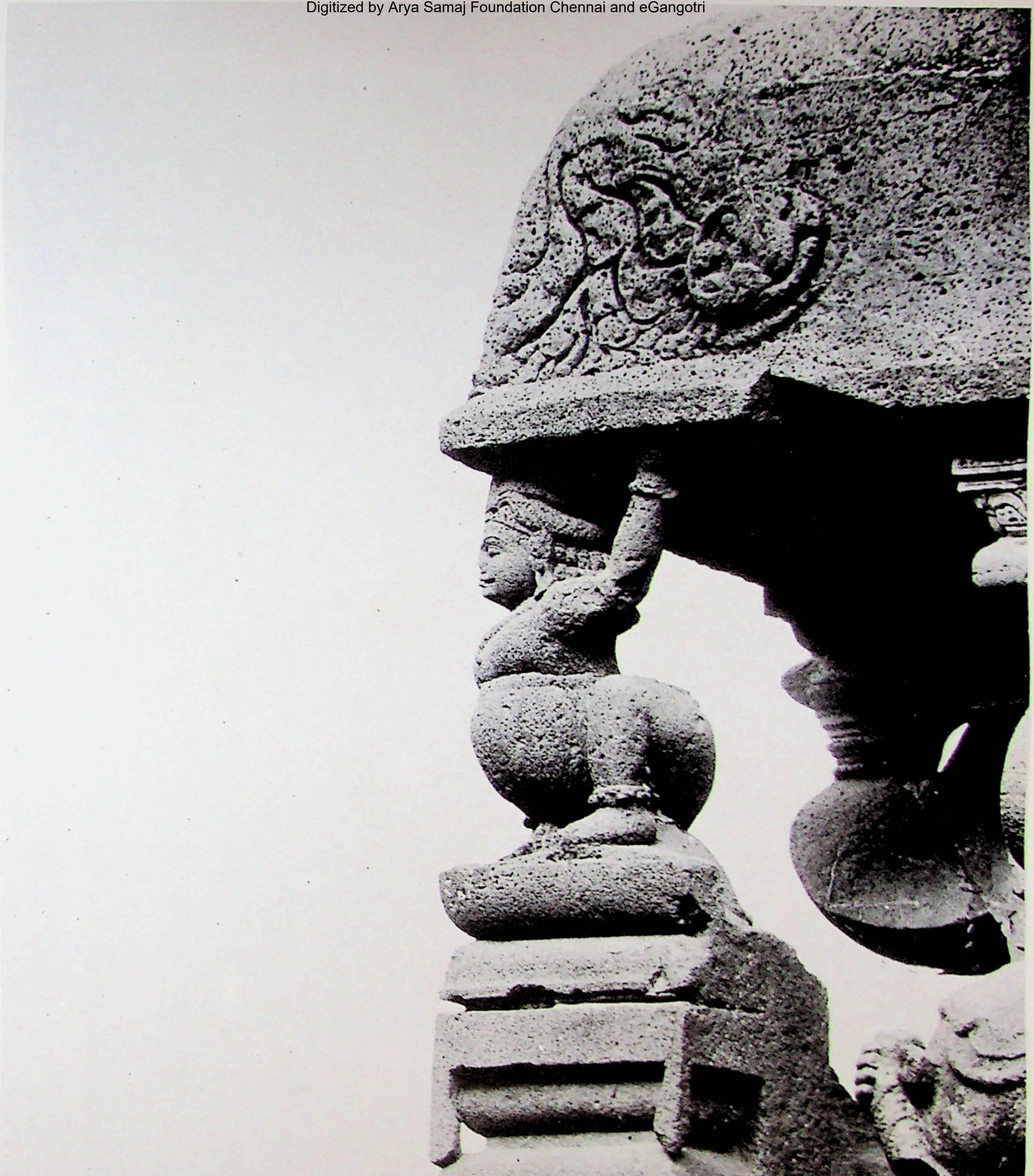
12. Victory pillar and elephant in north court.



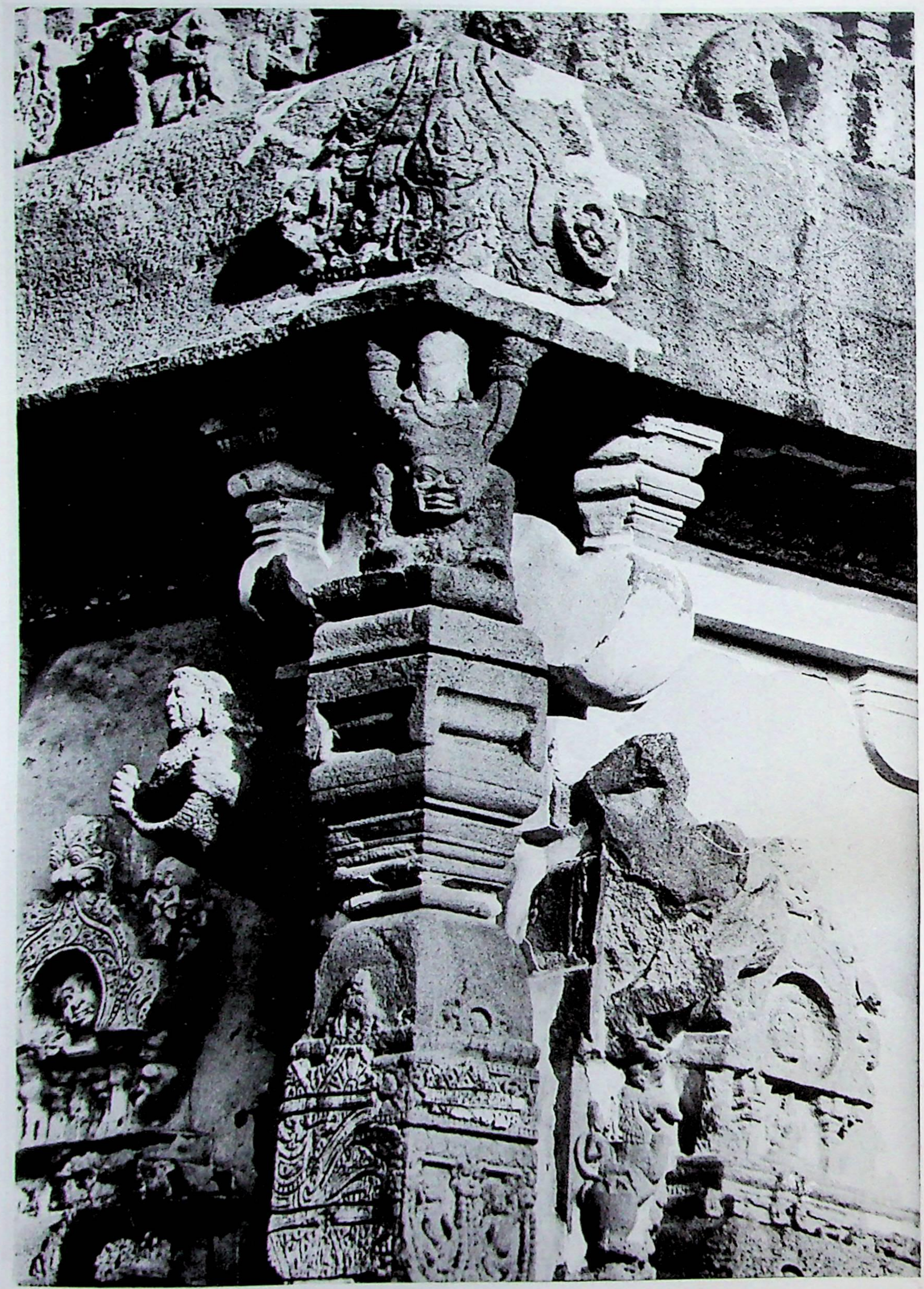
13. Victory pillar in north court, details of southern face.



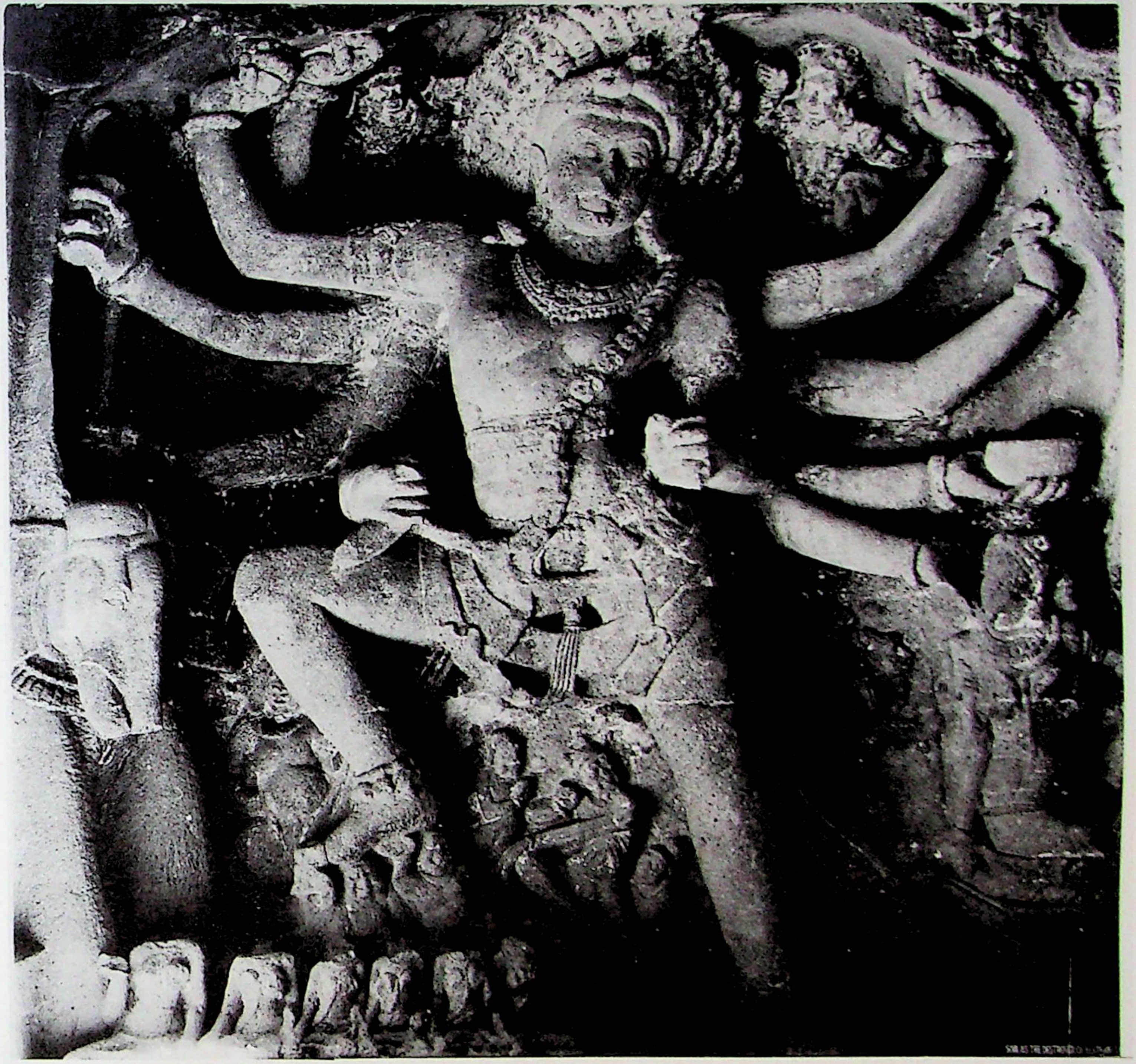
14. Victory pillar in south court and Nandi pavilion.



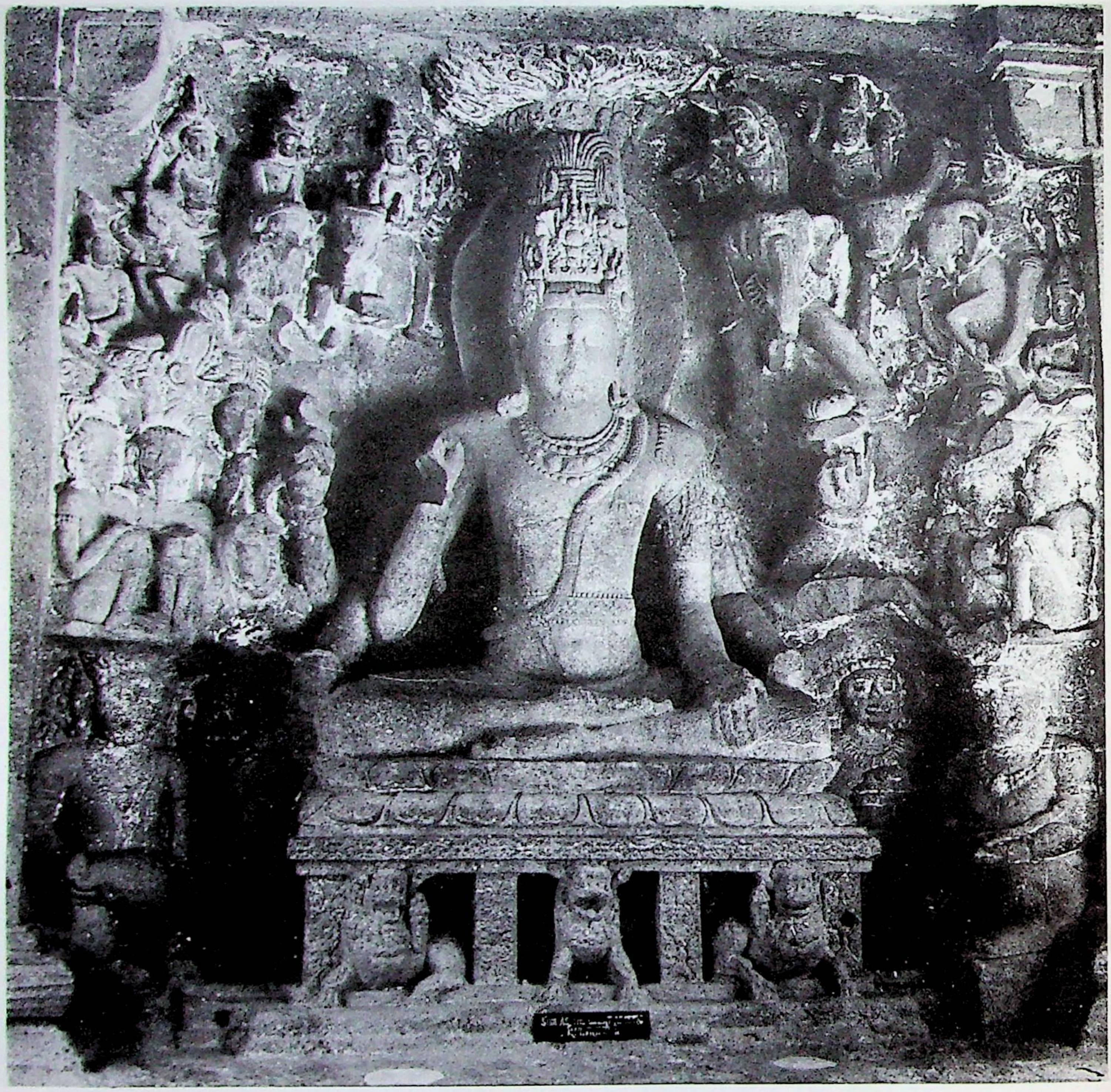
15. Dwarf supporting roof of Nandi pavilion.



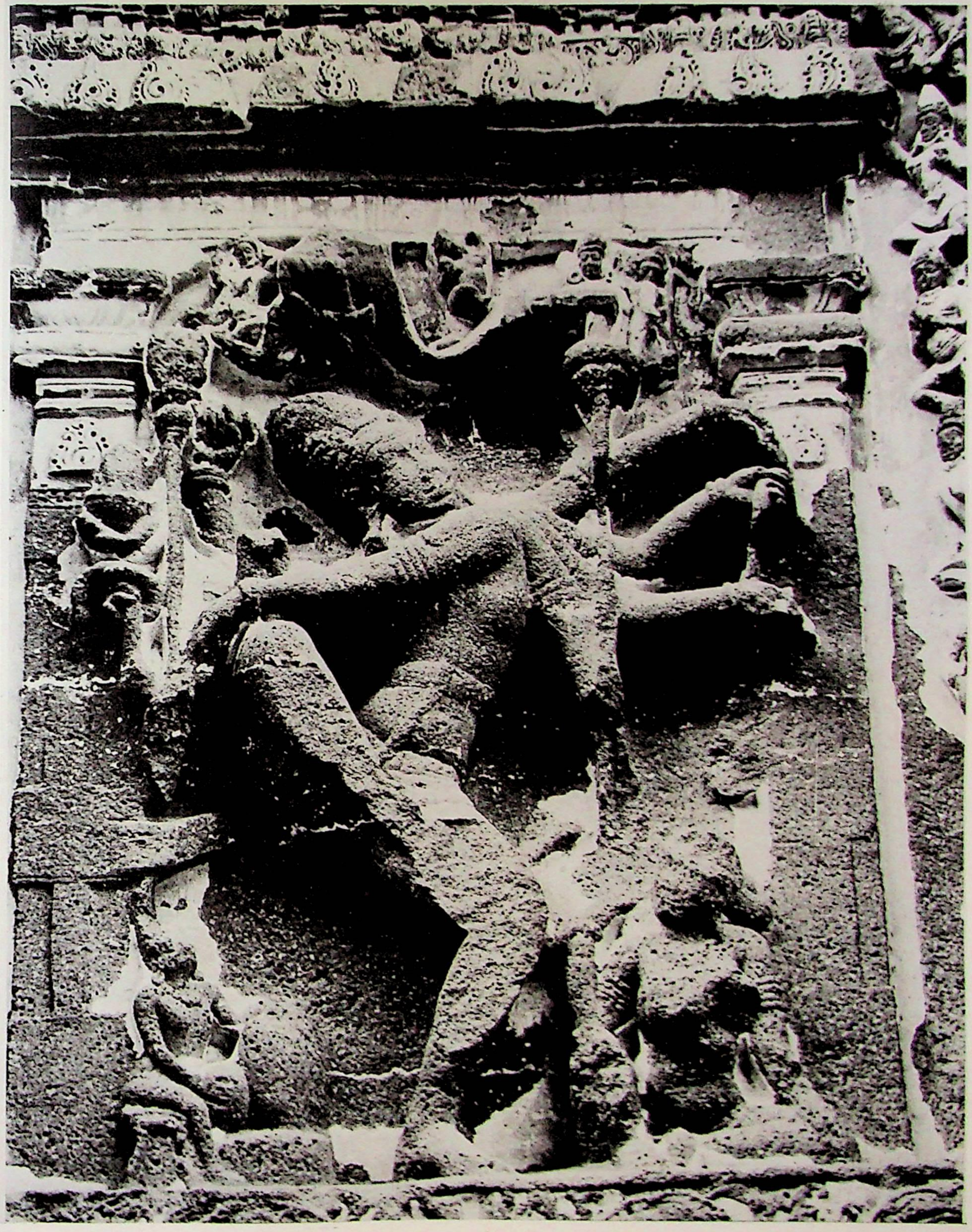
16. Dwarf with *udara-mukha* motif.



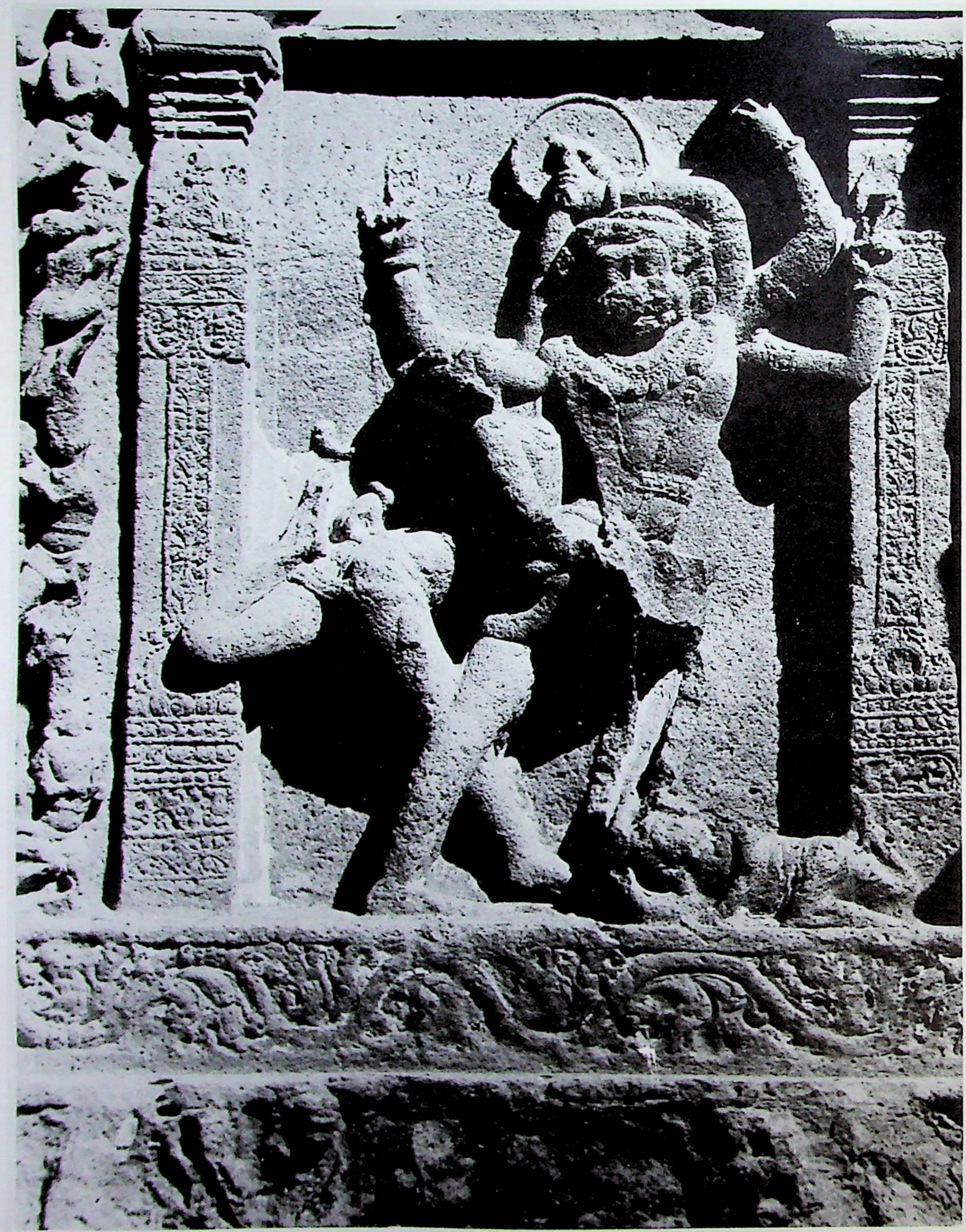
17. Siva as Andhakasura-vadha-murti.



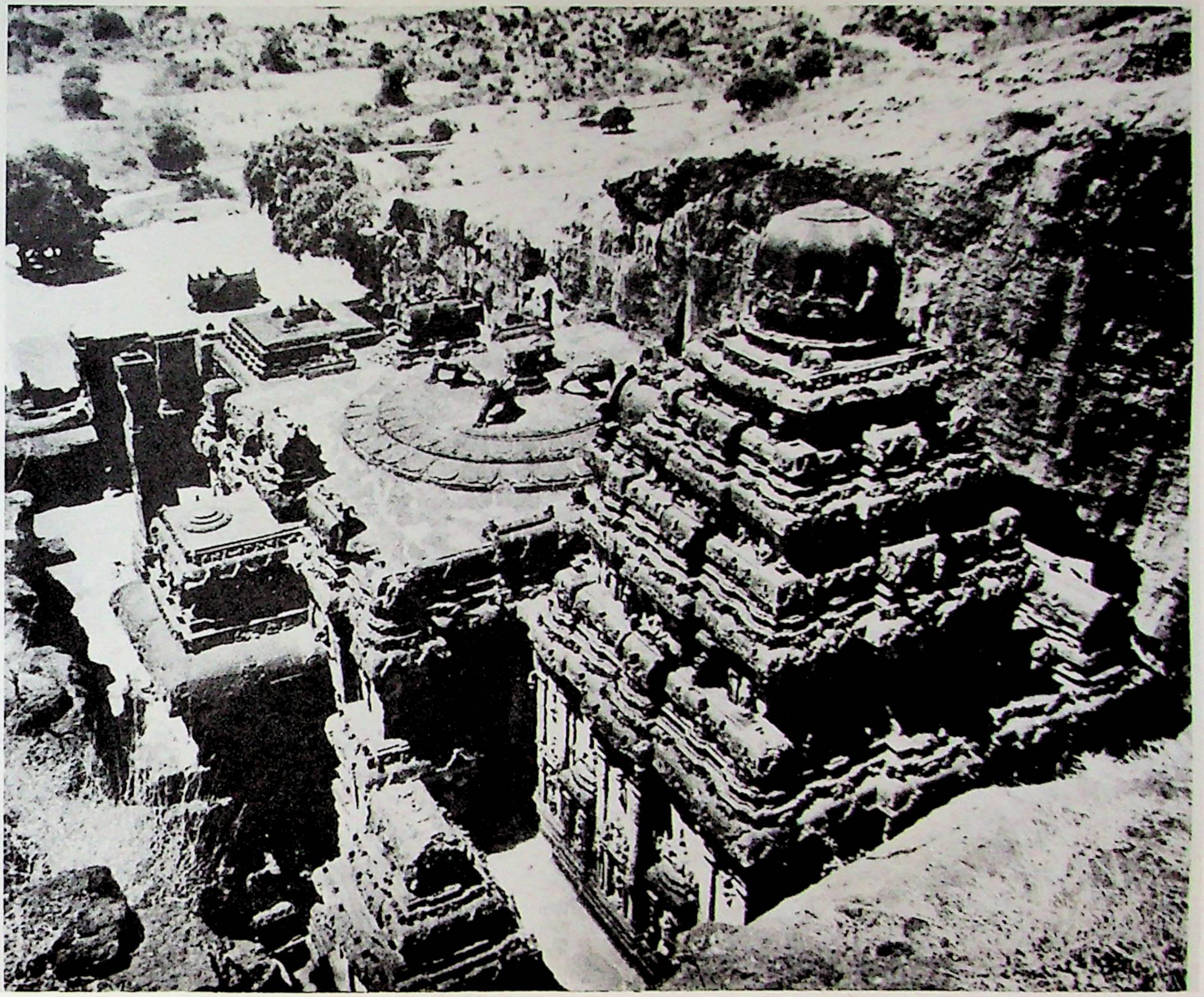
18. Siva as Mahayogi.



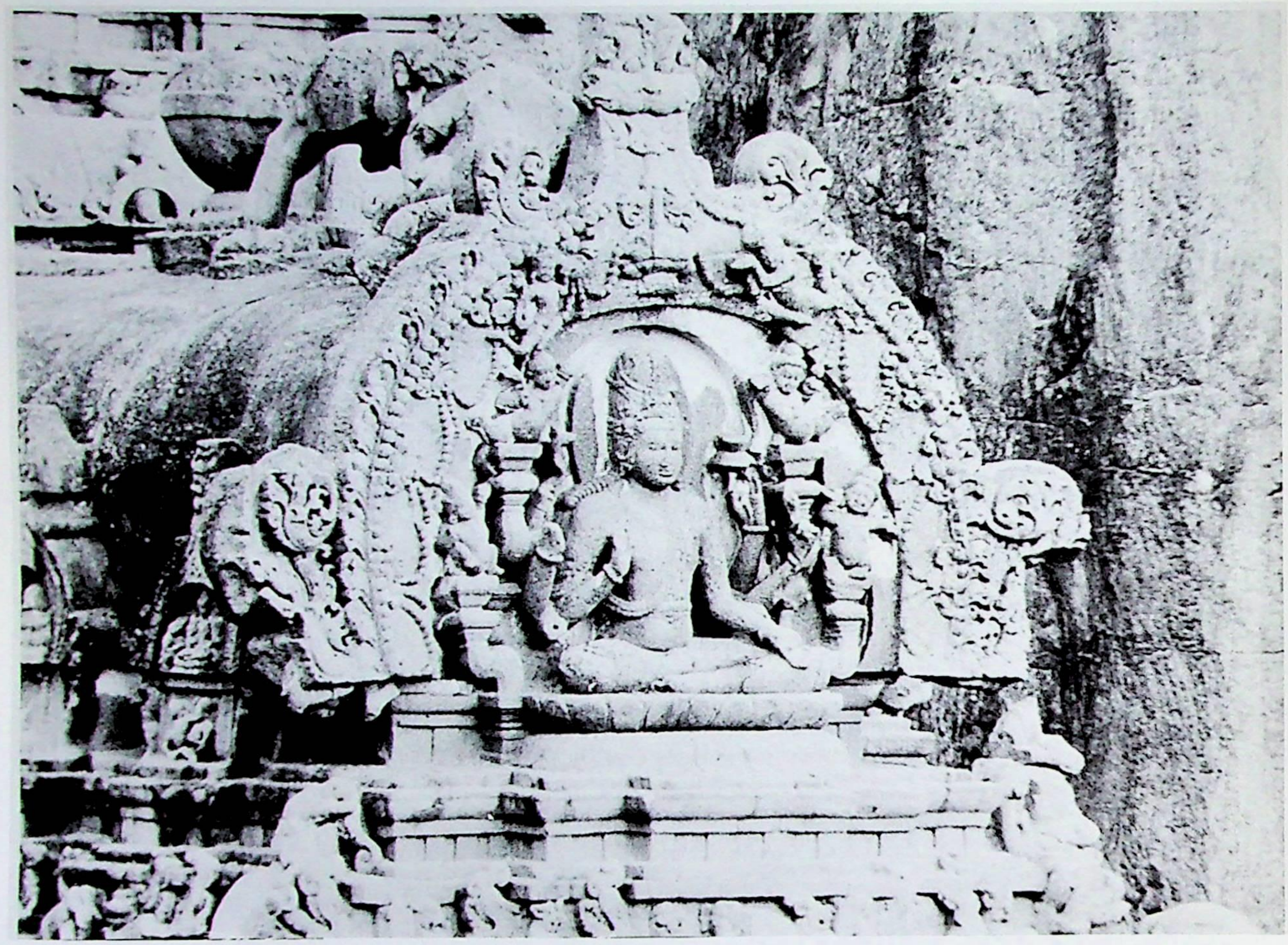
19. Siva dancing, north wall of Nandi pavilion.



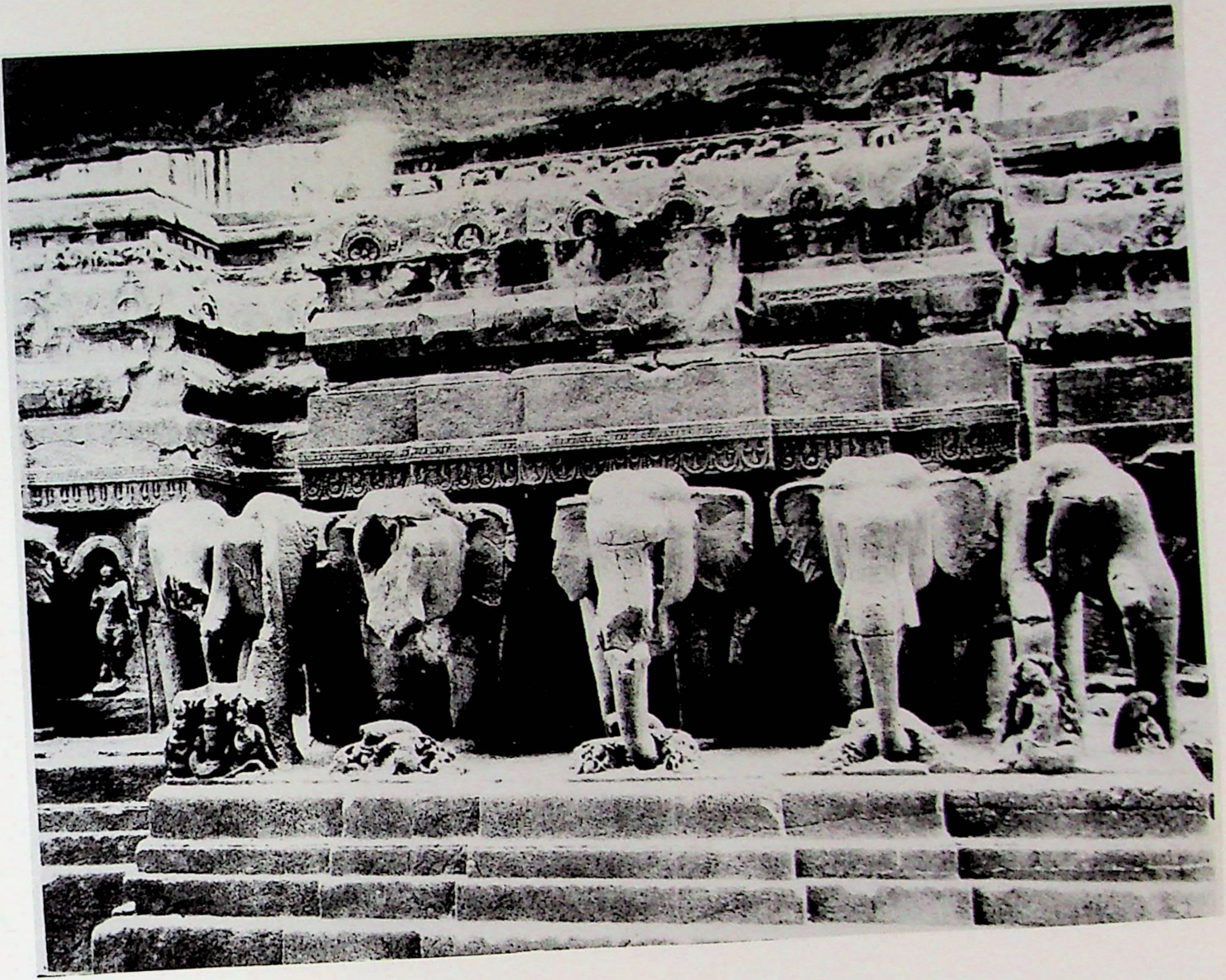
20. Narasimha on south wall of Nandi pavilion.



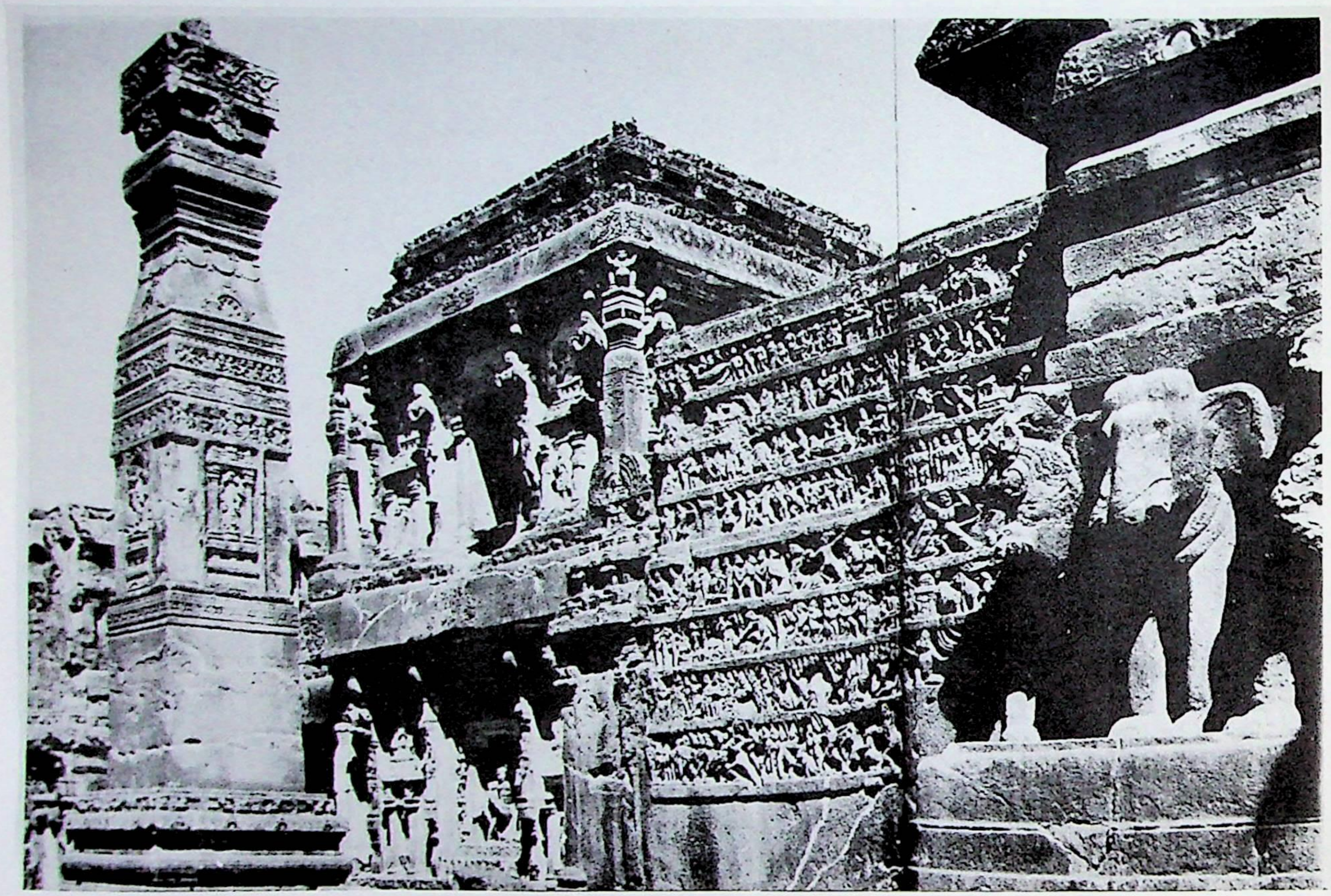
21. *Shikhara* details.



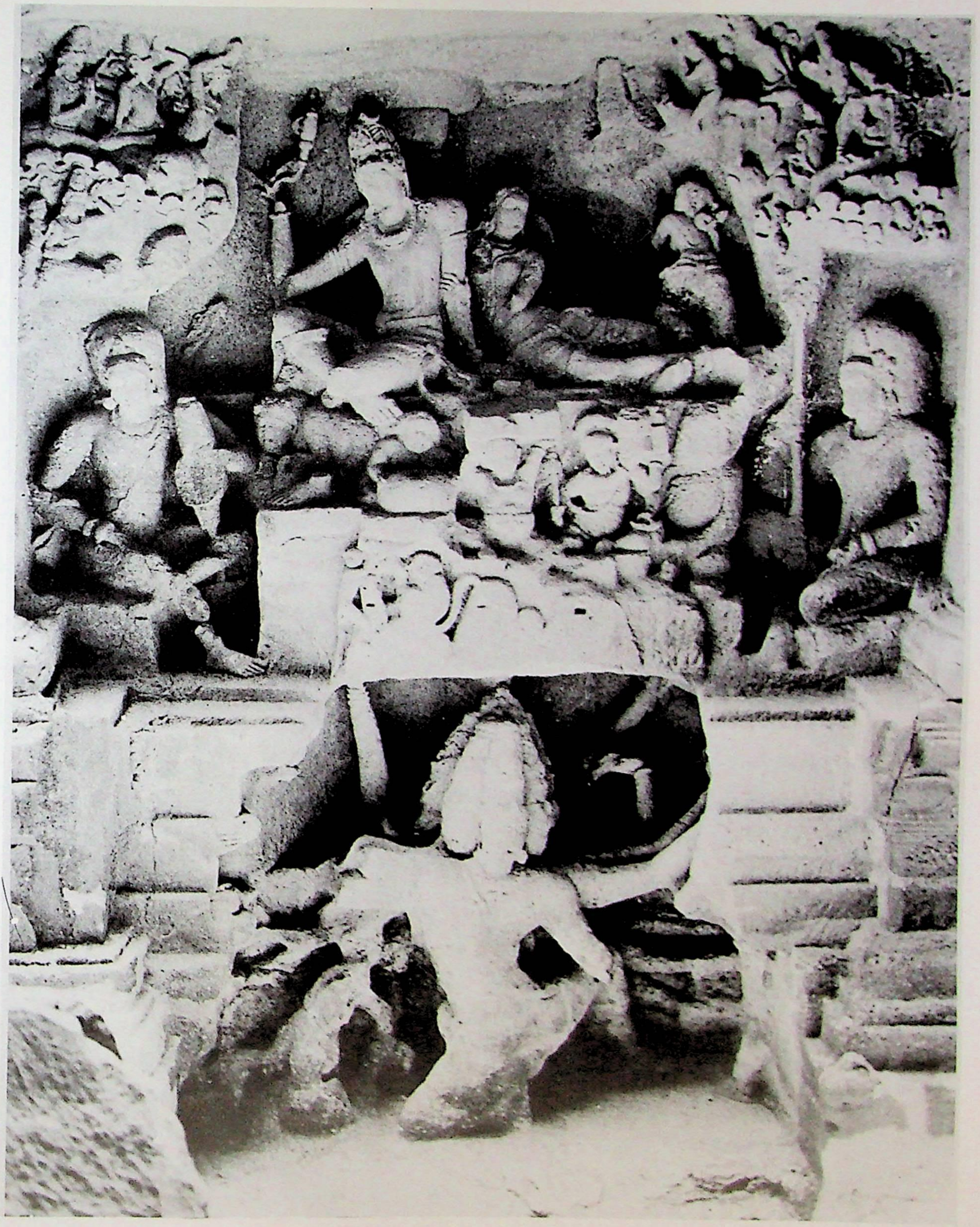
22. Siva on the *Shikhara.*



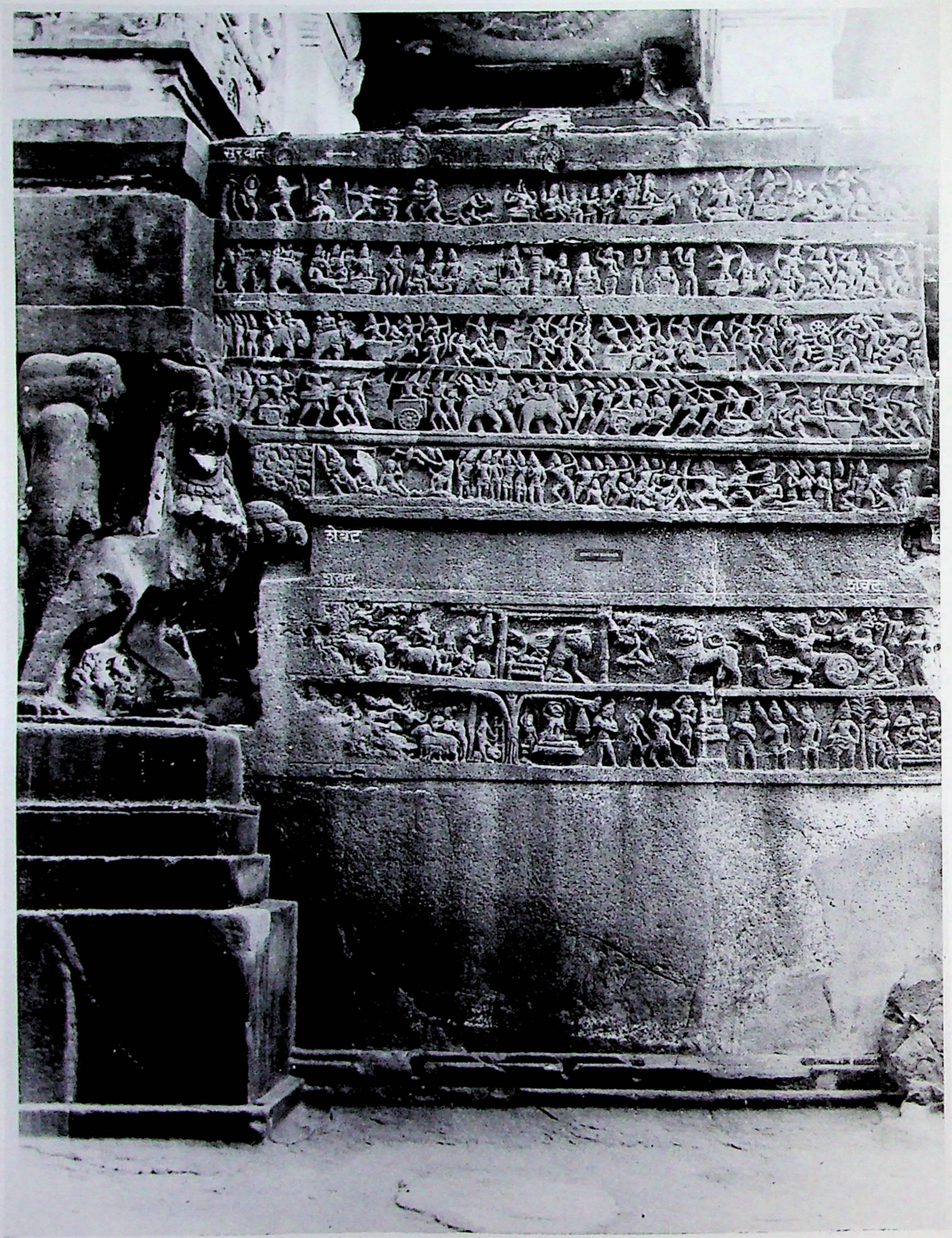
23. Elephants supporting the main temple.



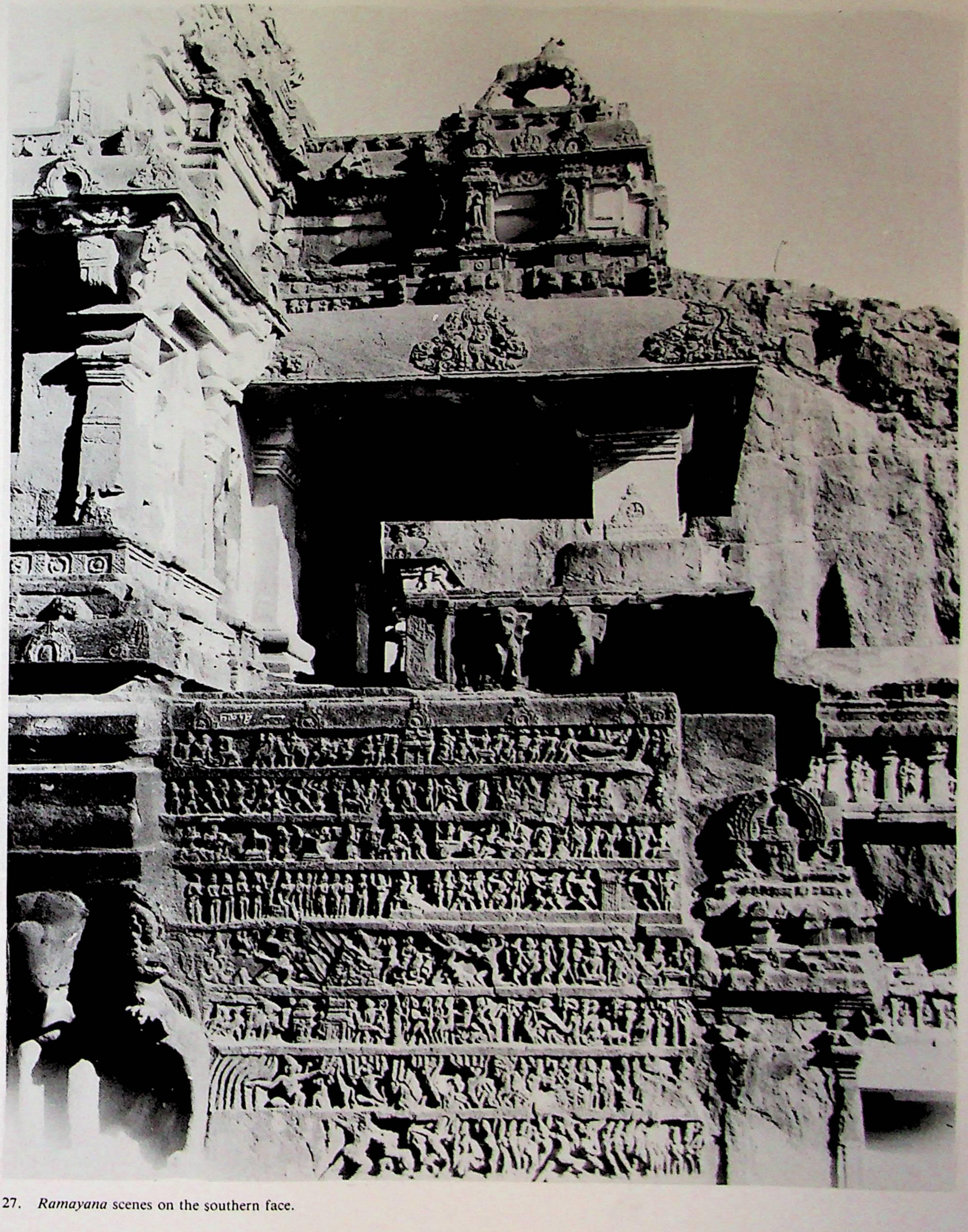
24. Main temple and Nandi pavilion, southern face, with scenes from the epics.



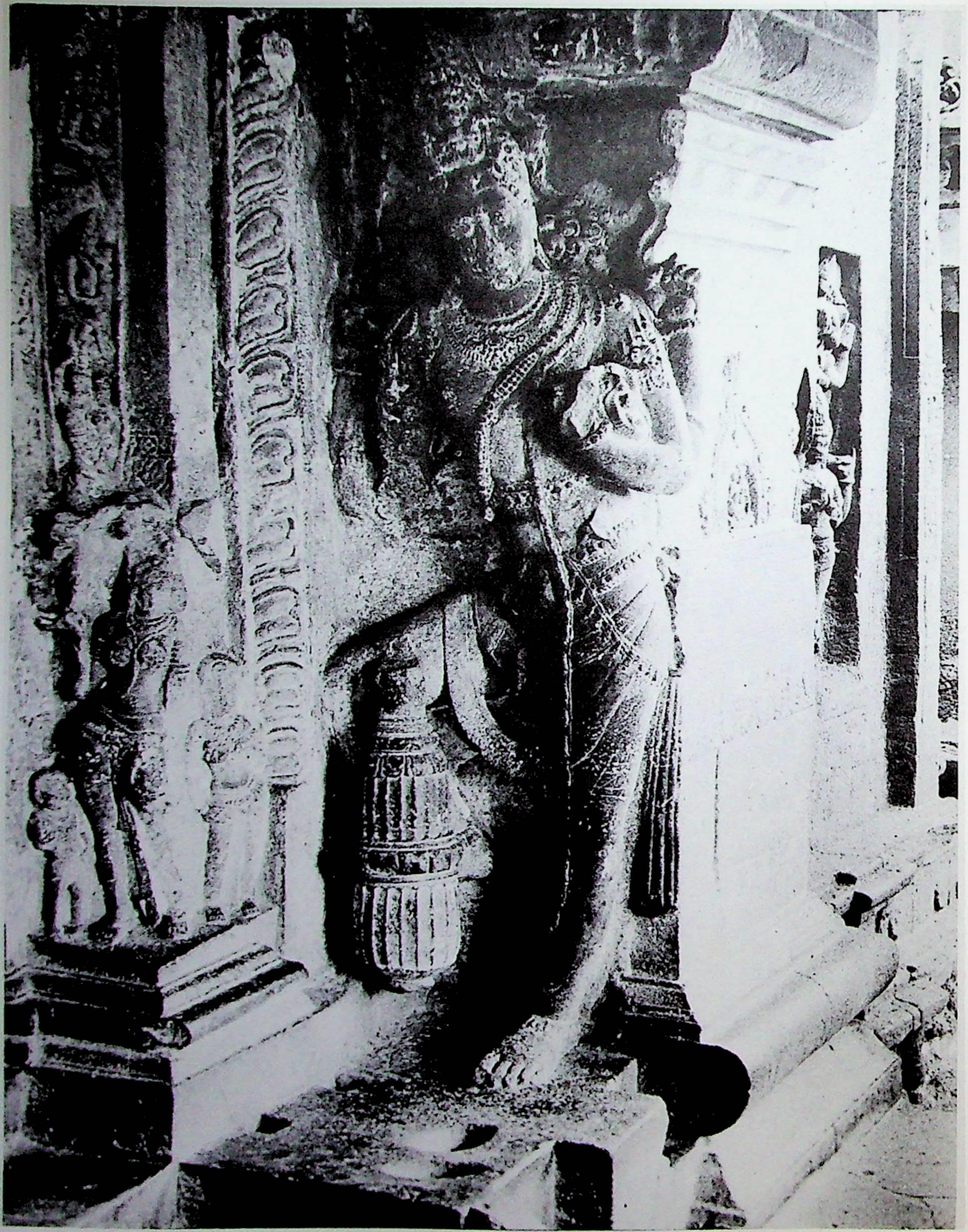
25. Ravana shaking Kailas.



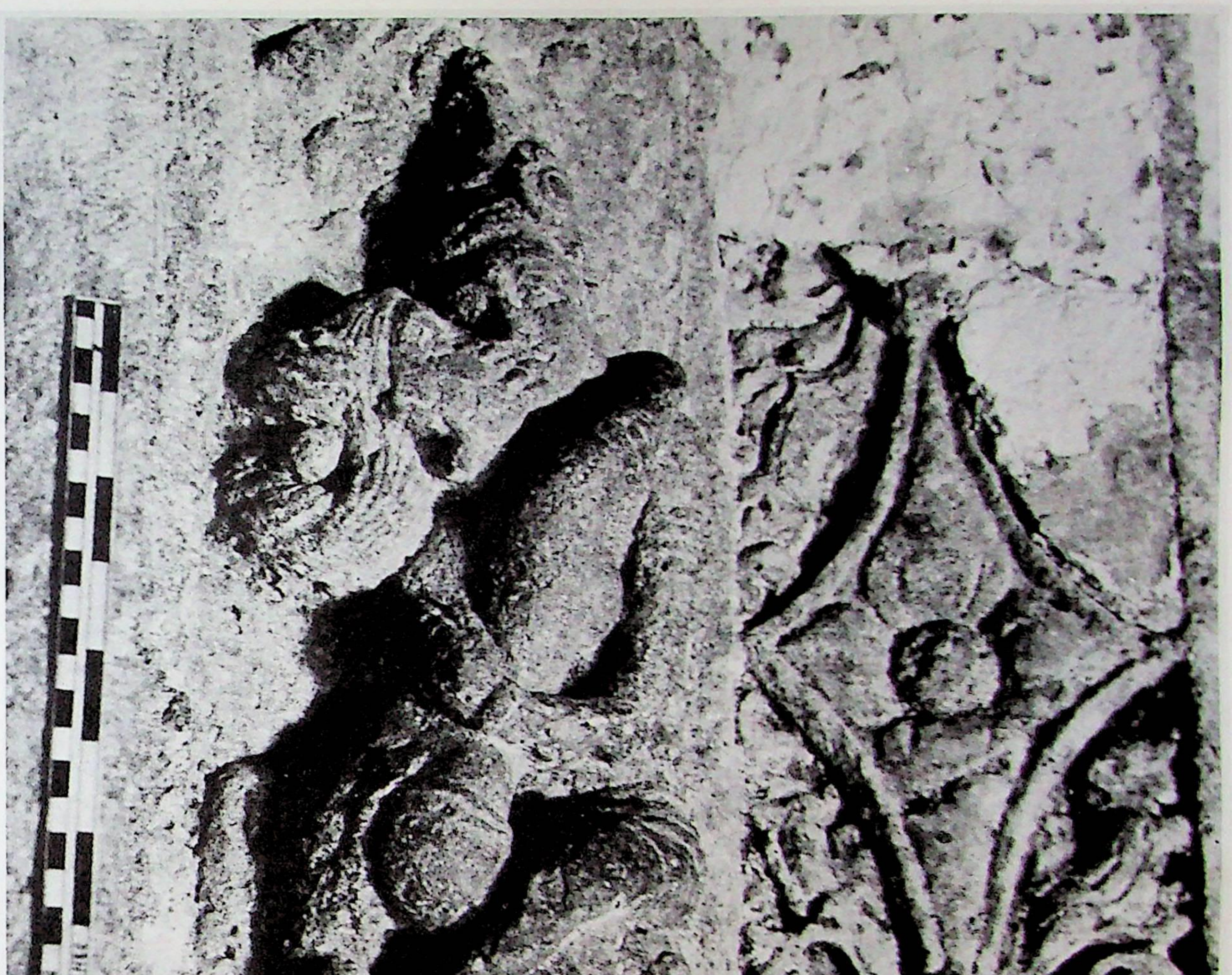
26. *Mahabharata* scenes on the northern face.



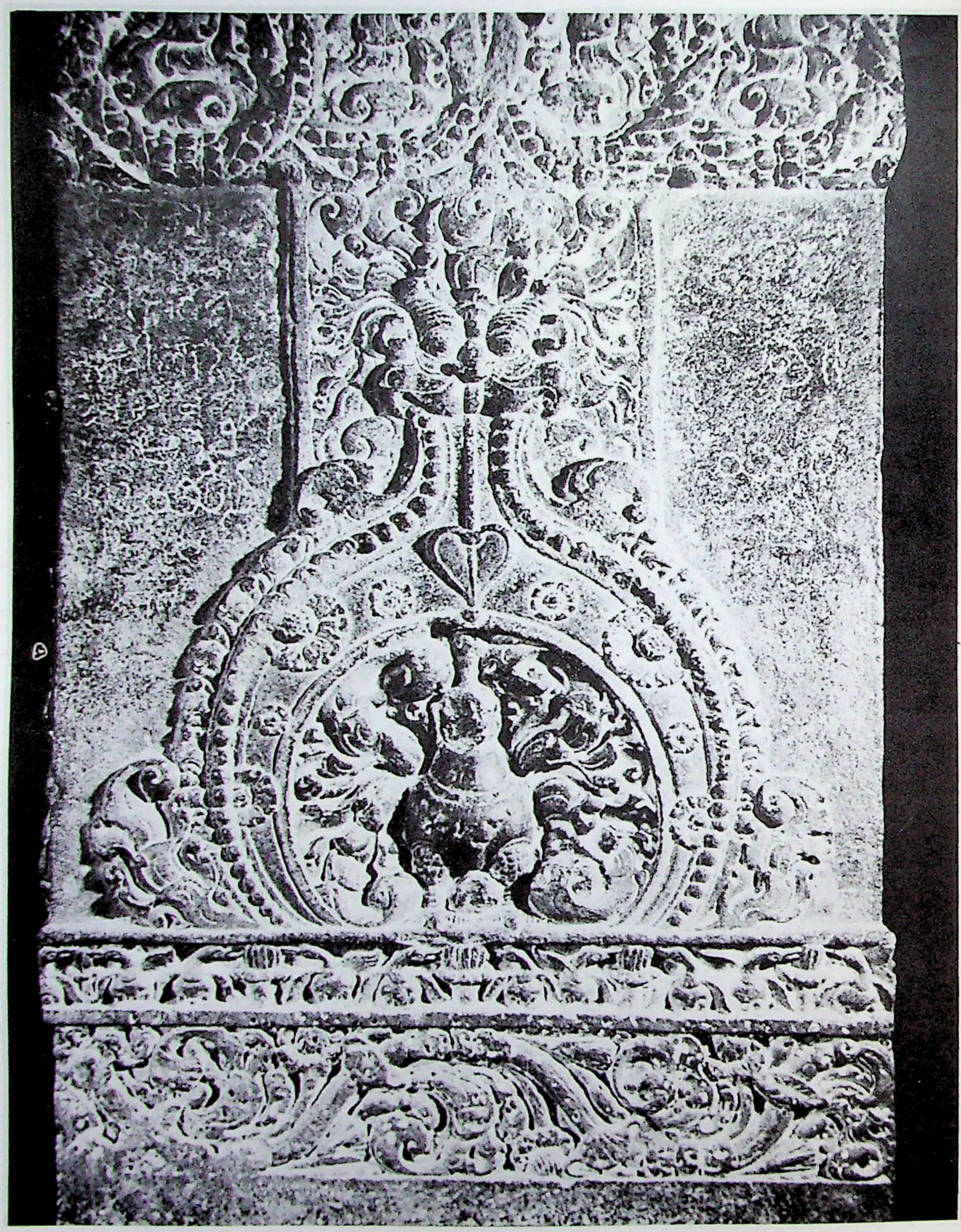
27. *Ramayana* scenes on the southern face.



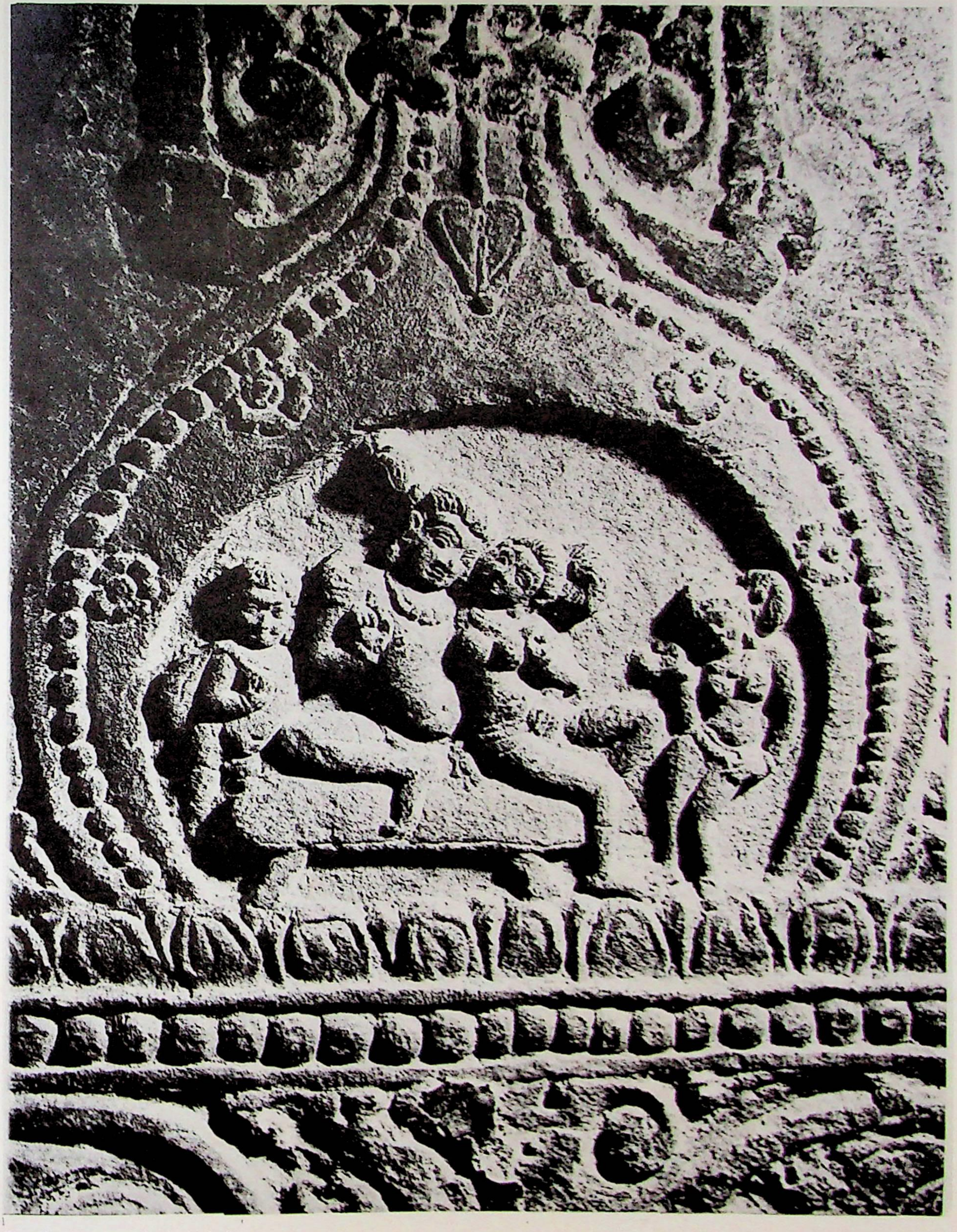
28. Siva-*dvarapala*.



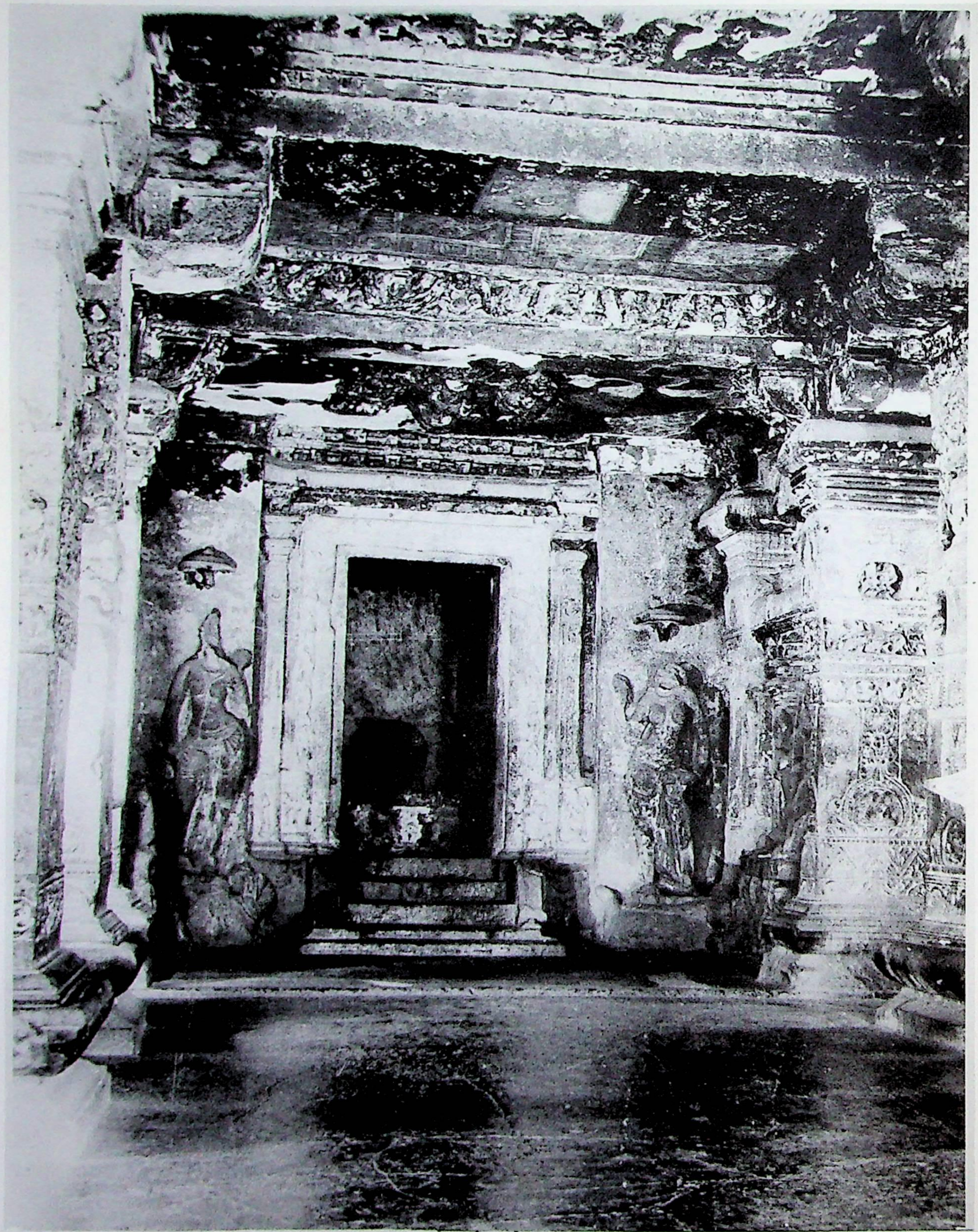
29. Entrance doorway, details.



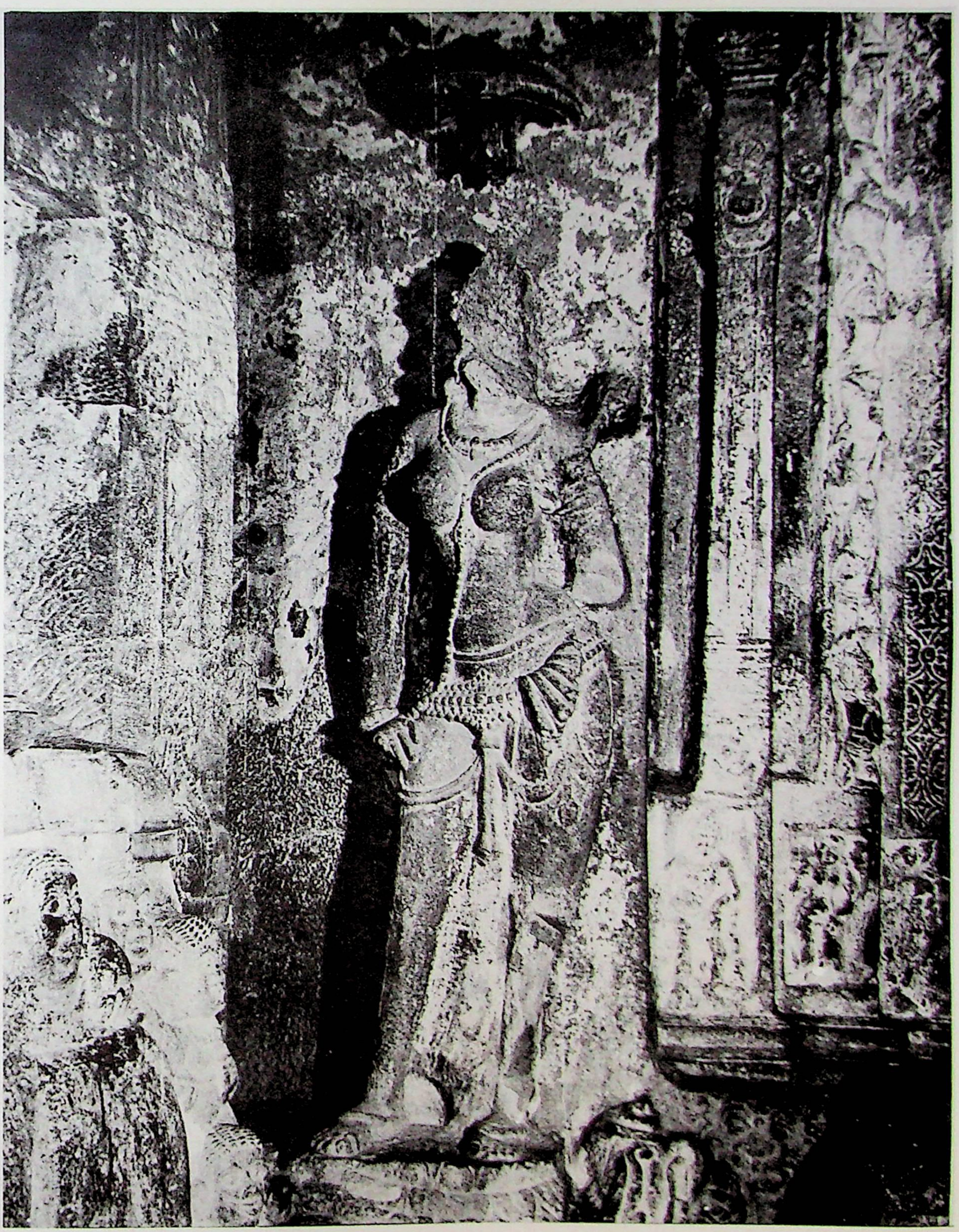
30. Details of a pillar in the hall.



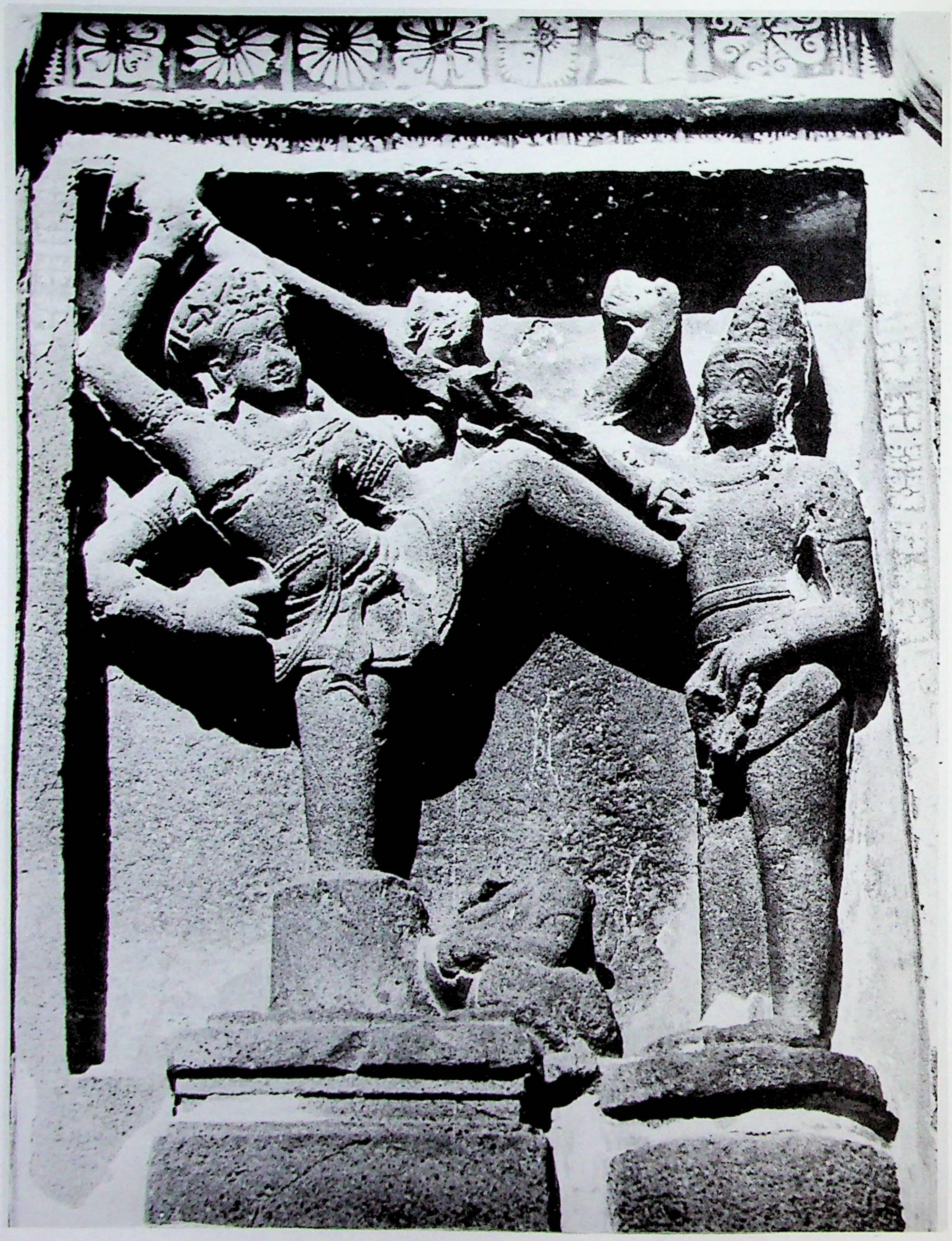
31. Details of a pillar in the hall.



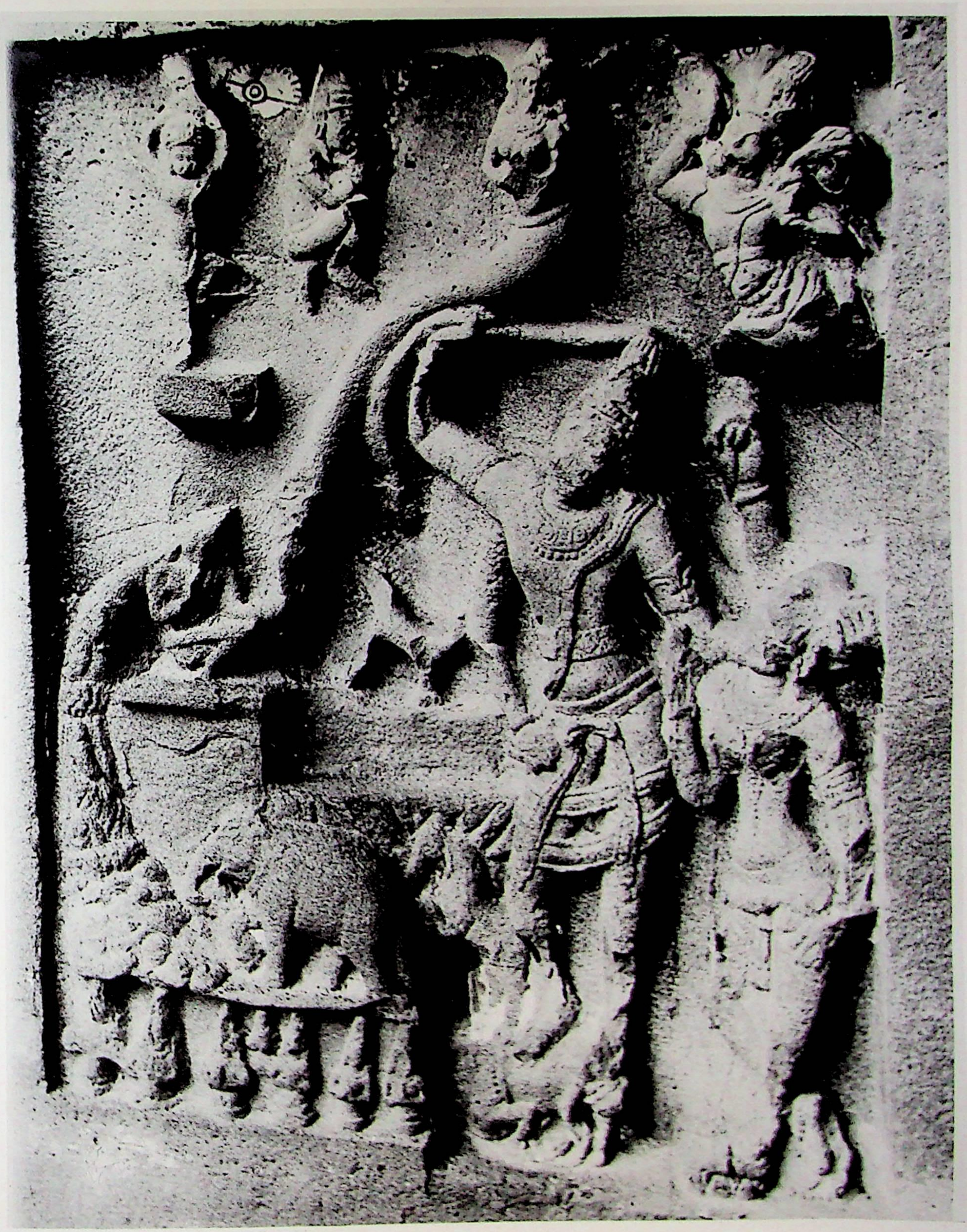
32. *Garbha-griha* entrance with Ganga and Yamuna.



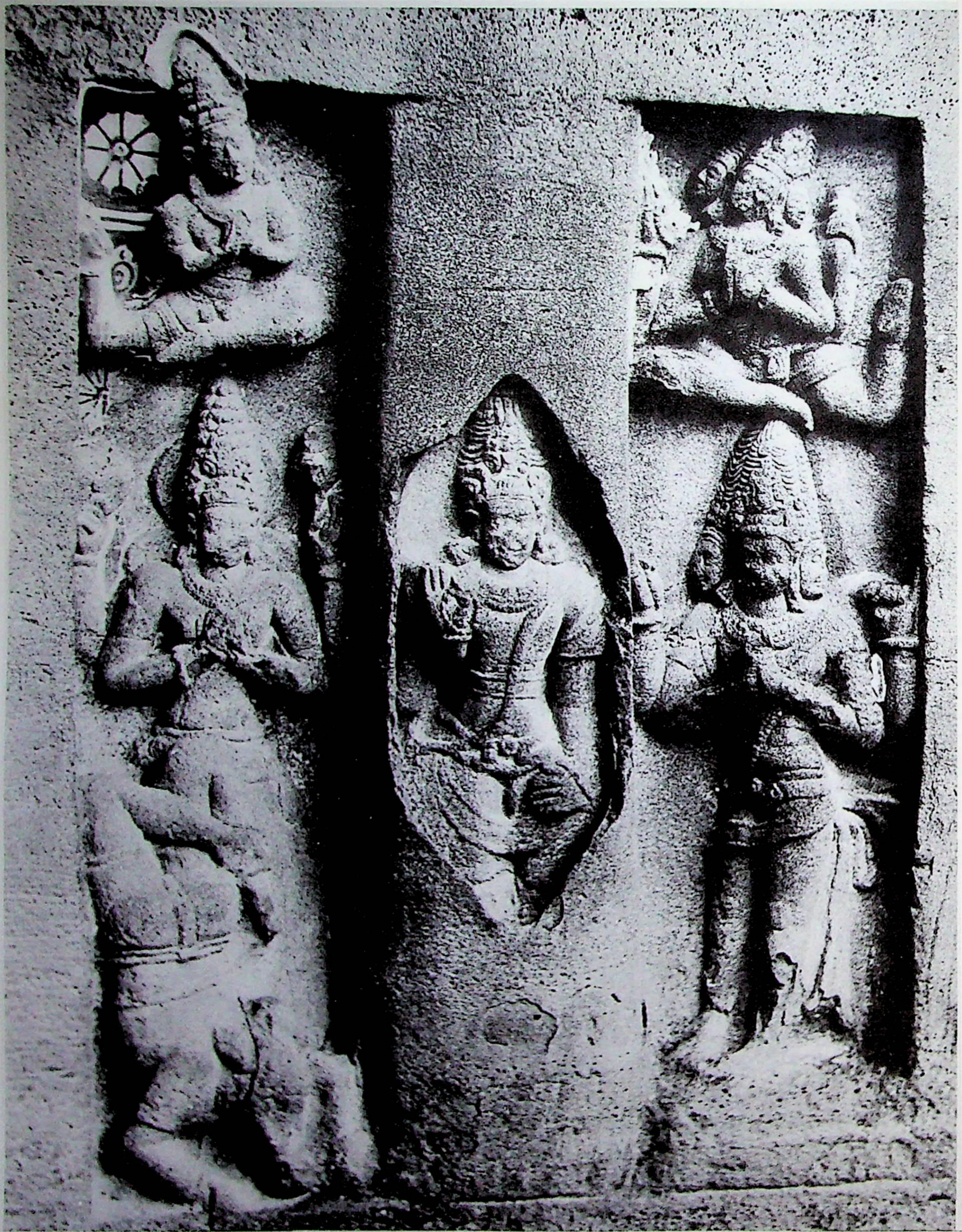
33. Entrance to *garbha-griha* with Ganga on *makara*.



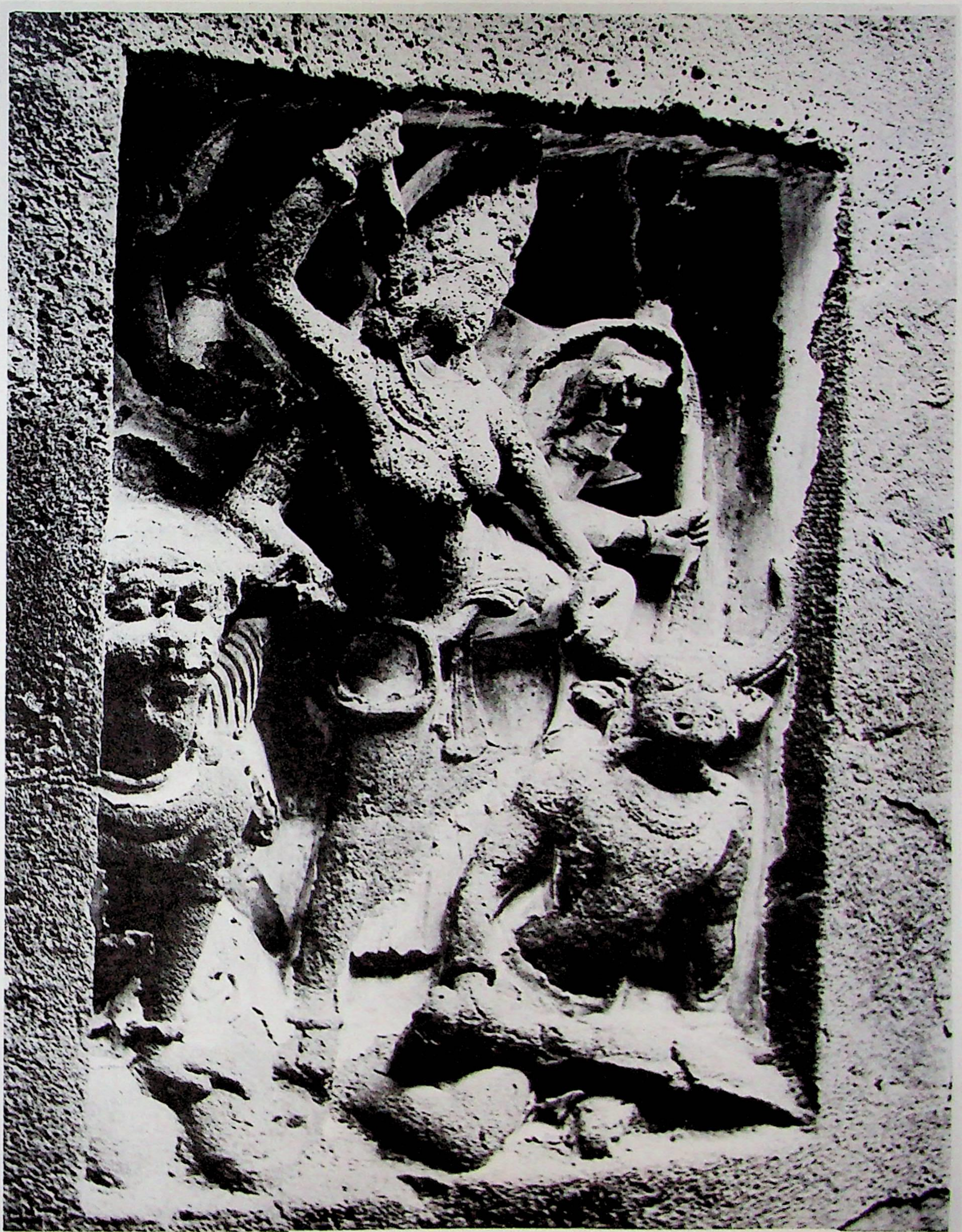
34. Siva protecting Markendeya, west wall.



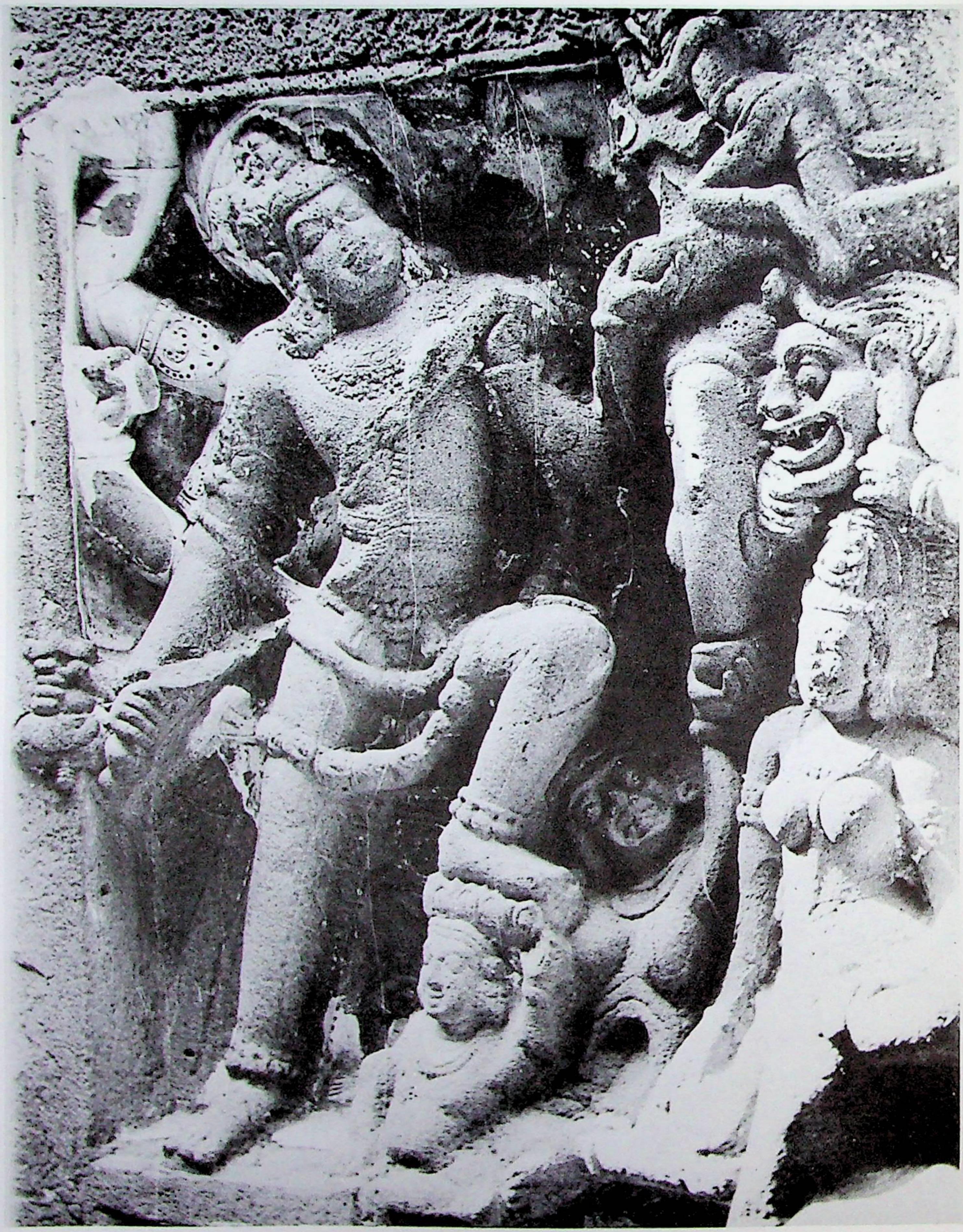
35. Descent of Ganga, west wall.



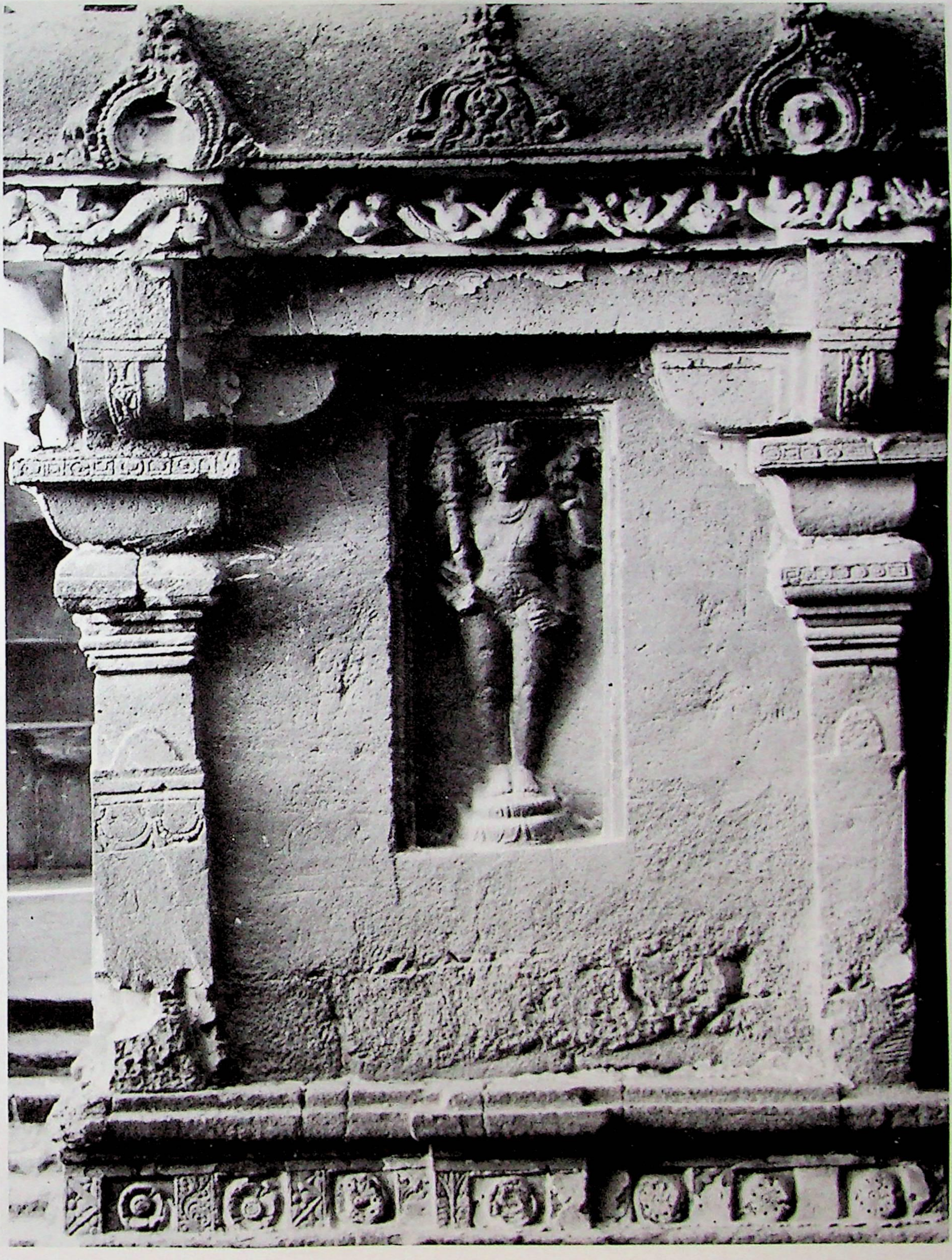
36. Lingodbhava-murti Siva, west wall.



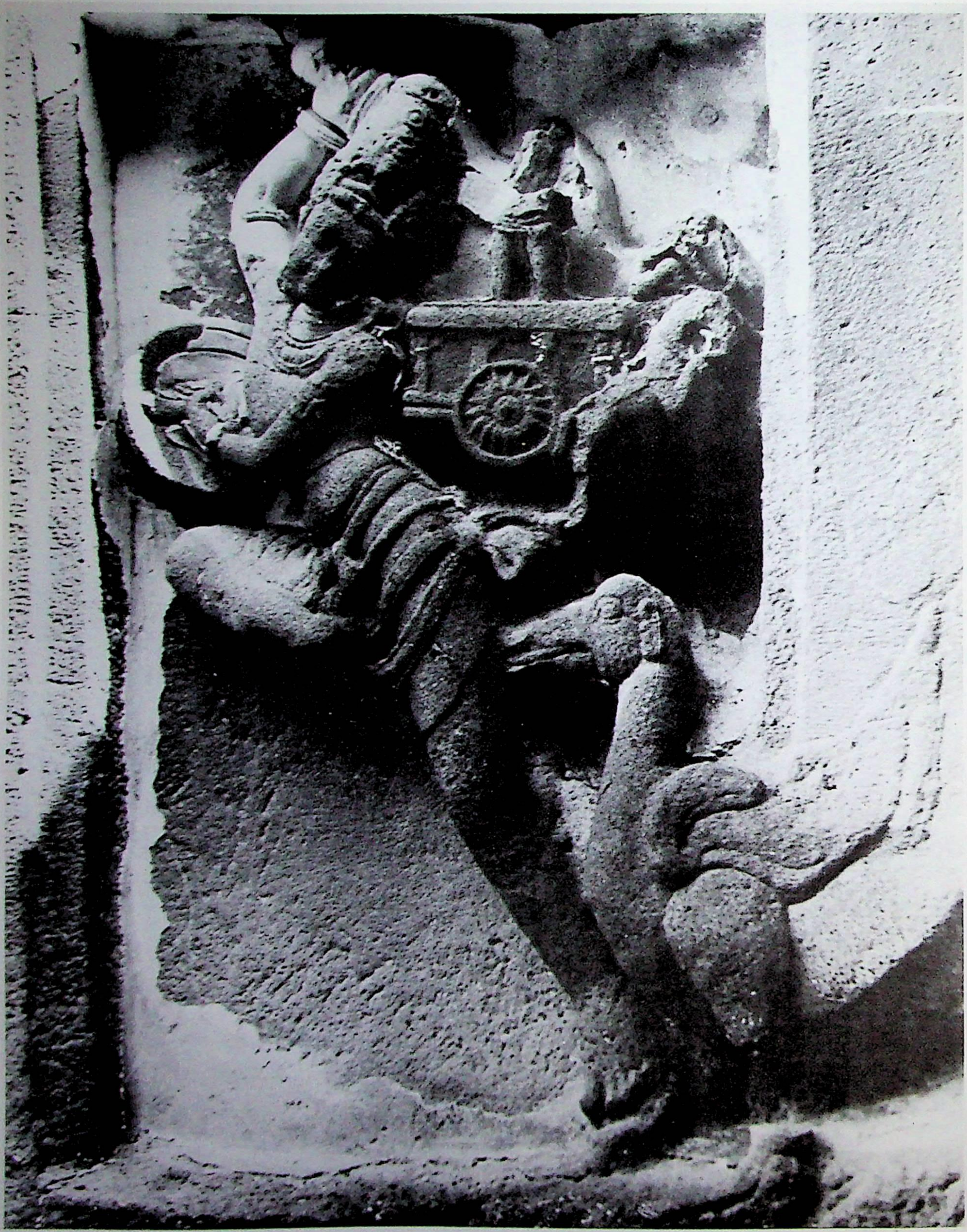
37. Mahishamardini Durga, north wall.



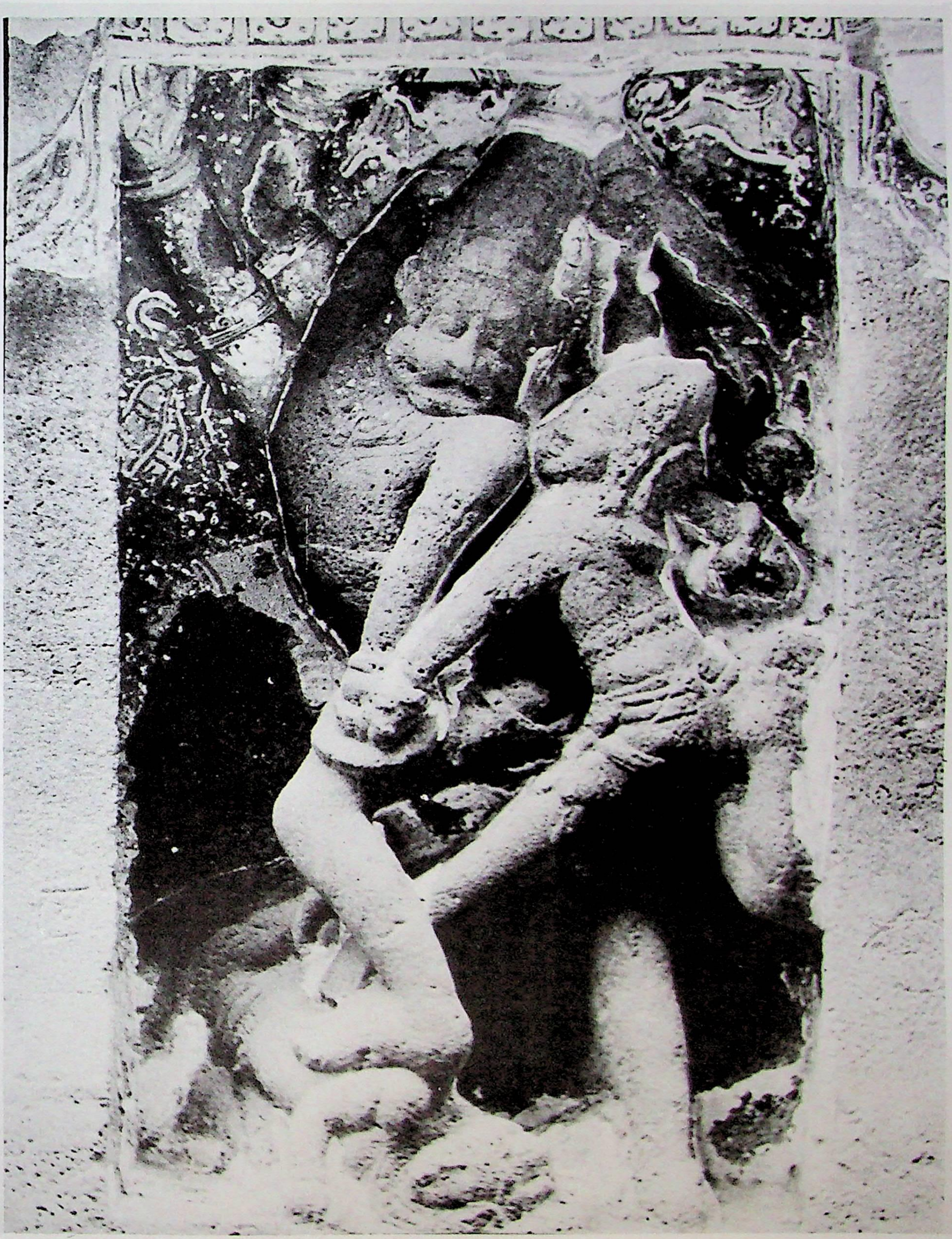
38. Siva killing Andhakasura, north wall.



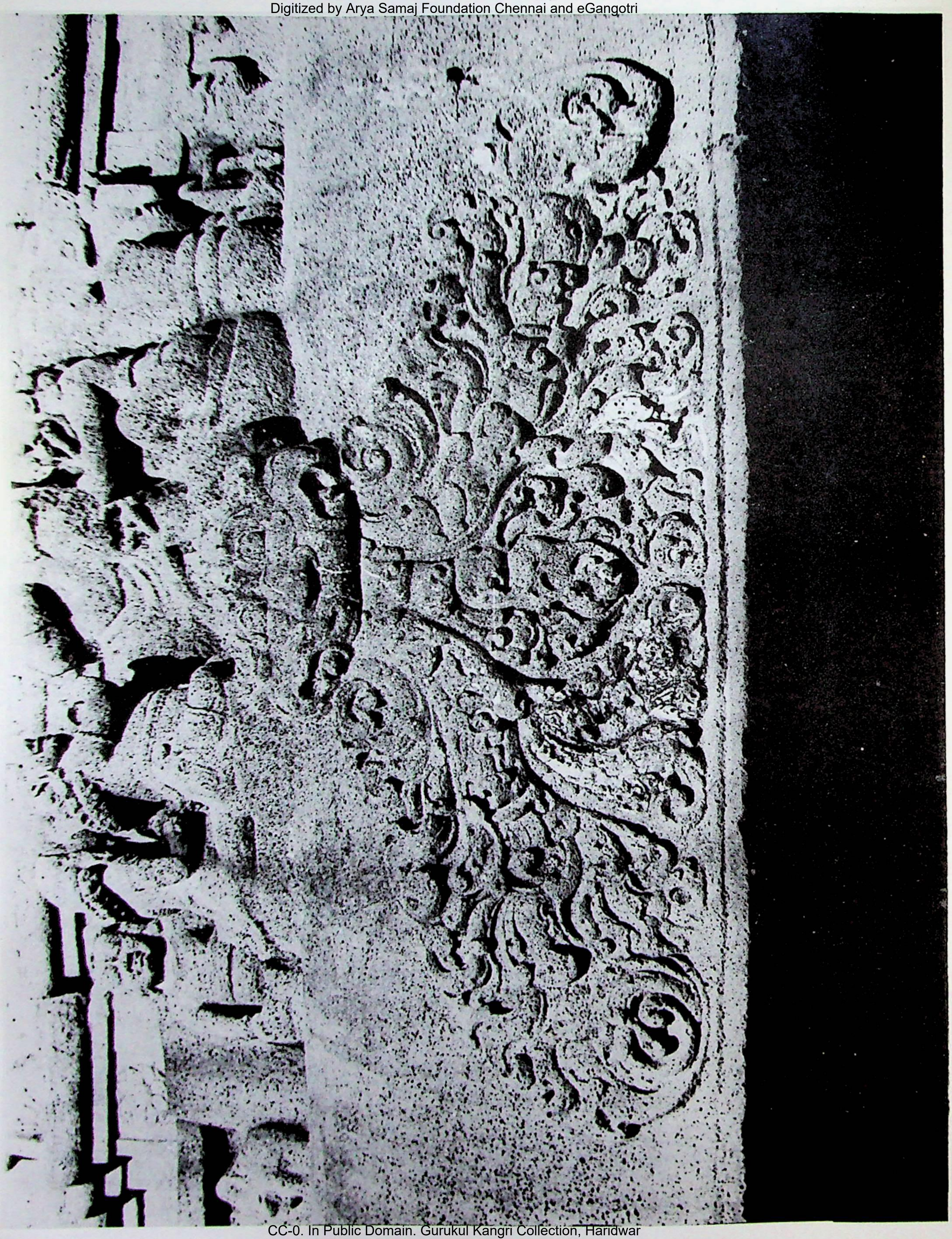
39. Lakulisha, south wall.



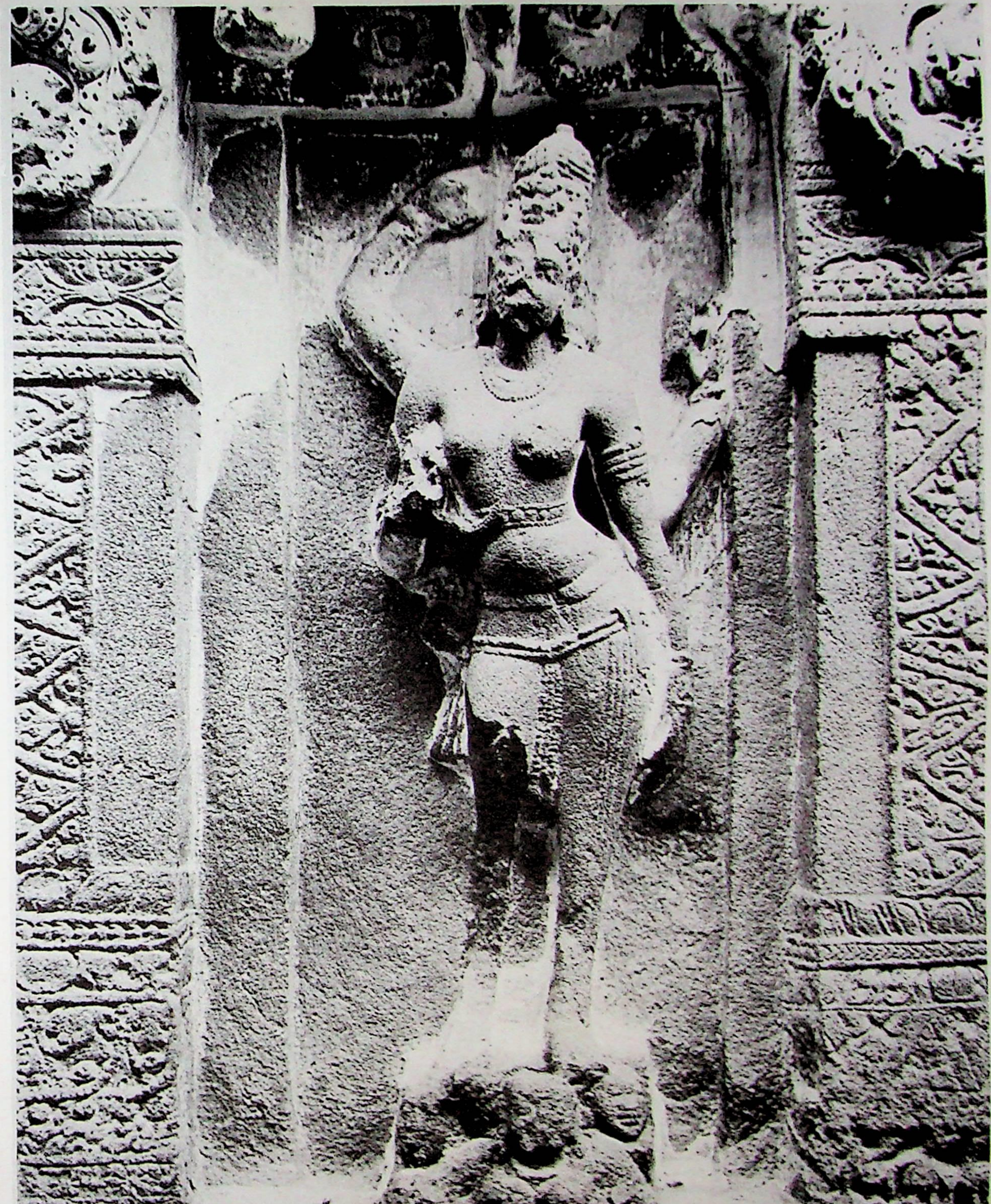
40. Abduction of Sita, south wall.



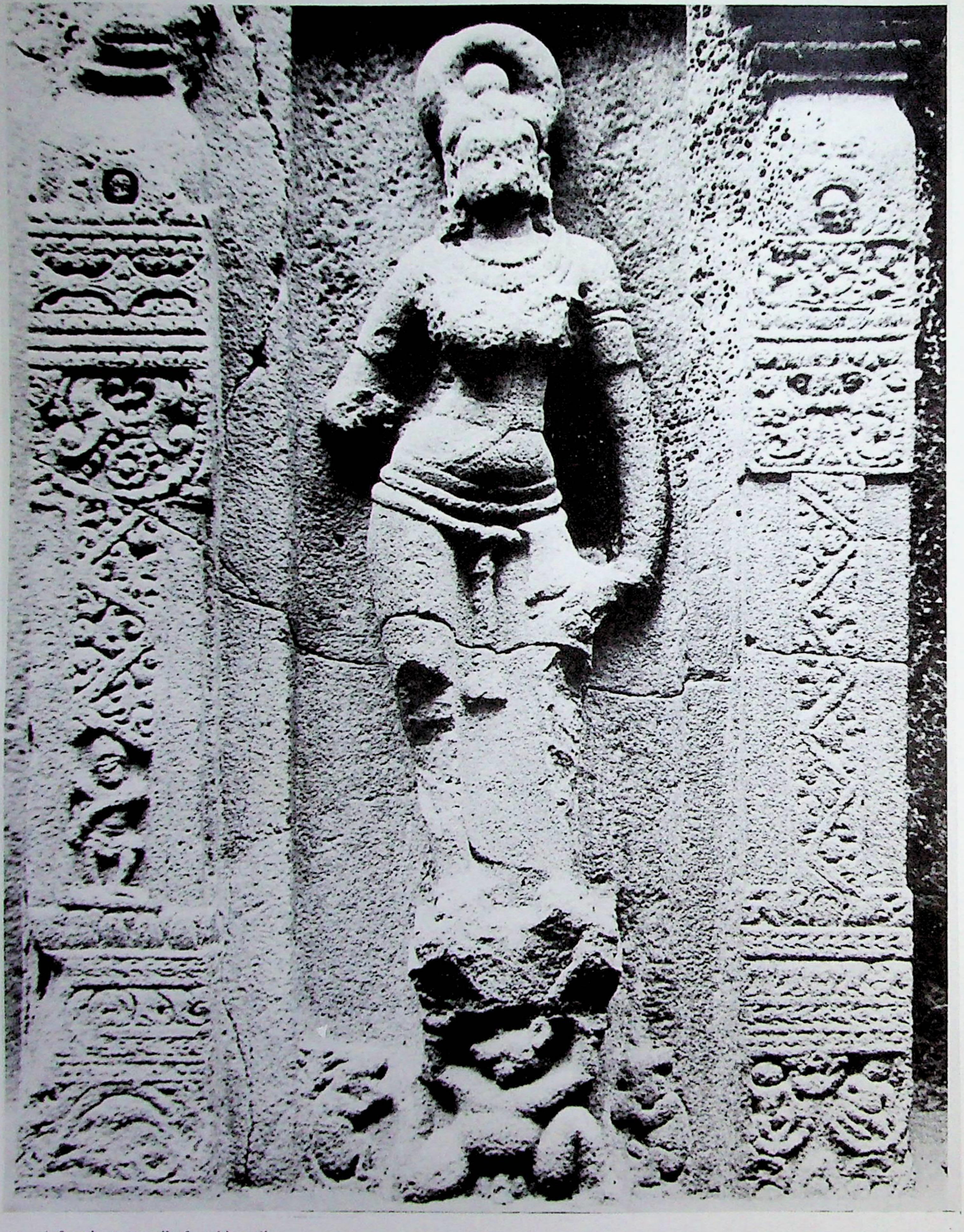
41. Narasimha's combat with demon Hiranya-kashipu.



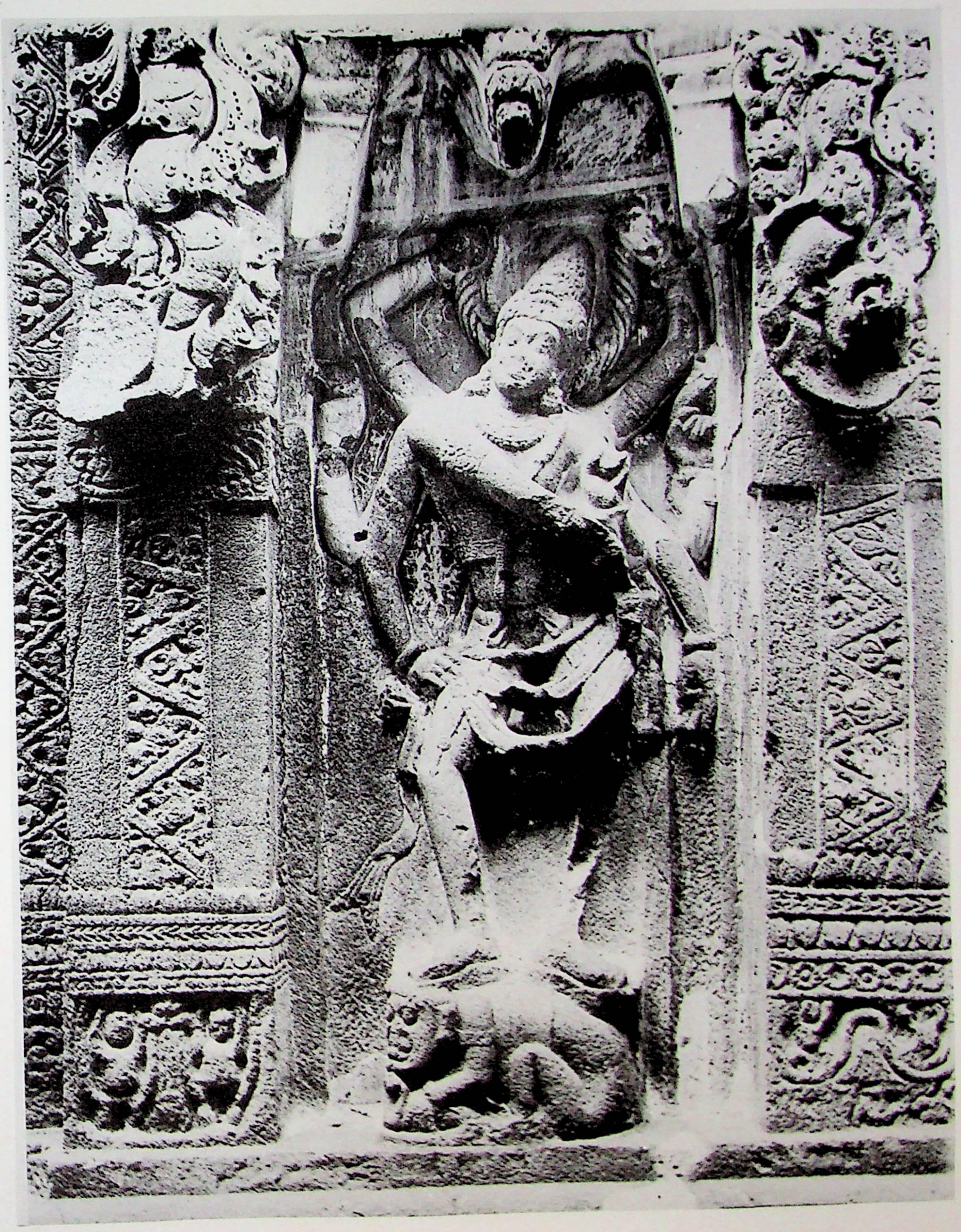
42. *Kirti-mukha* on the projecting eave of western porch.



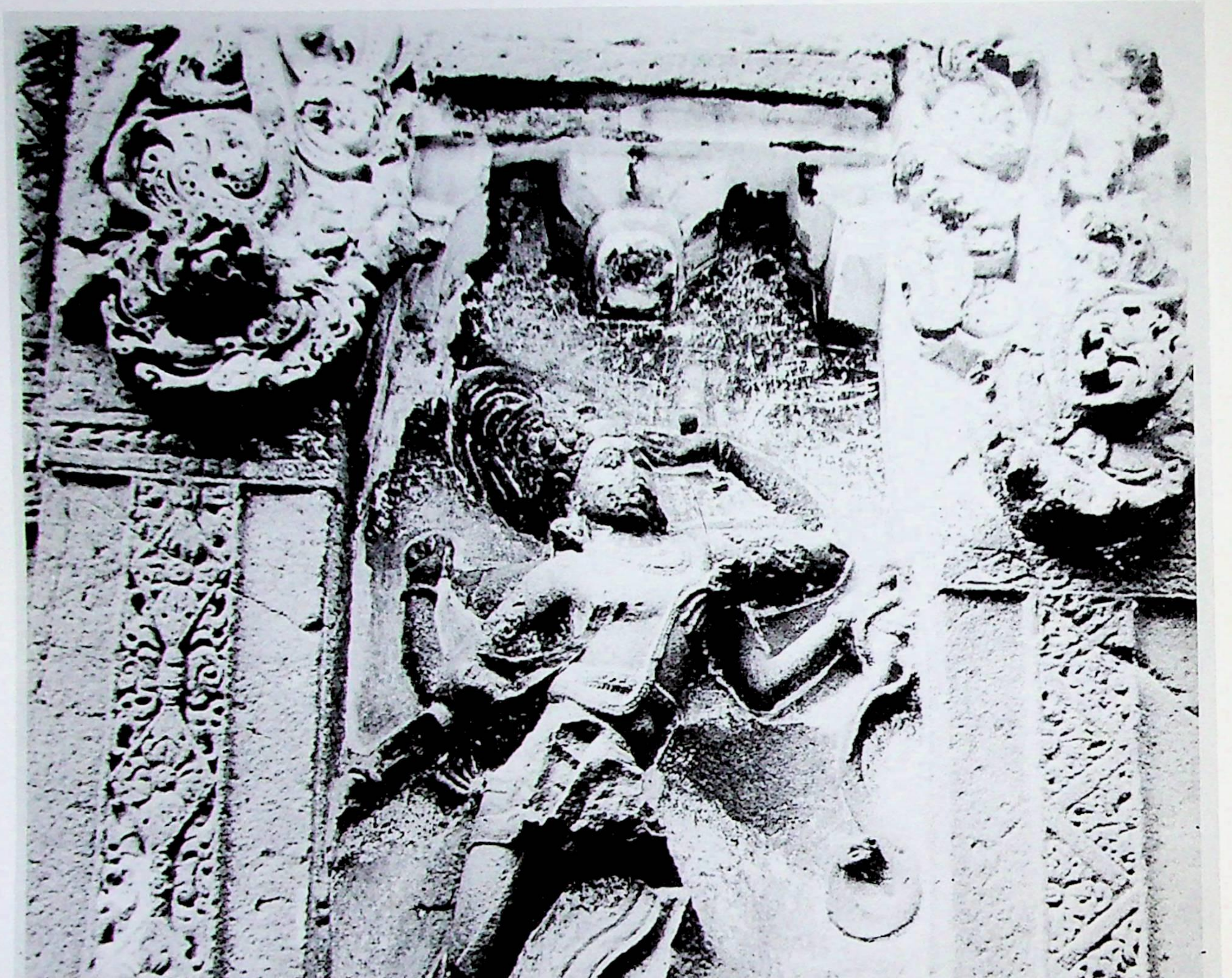
43. Ardhanarishwar Siva, north wall of *garbha-griha*.



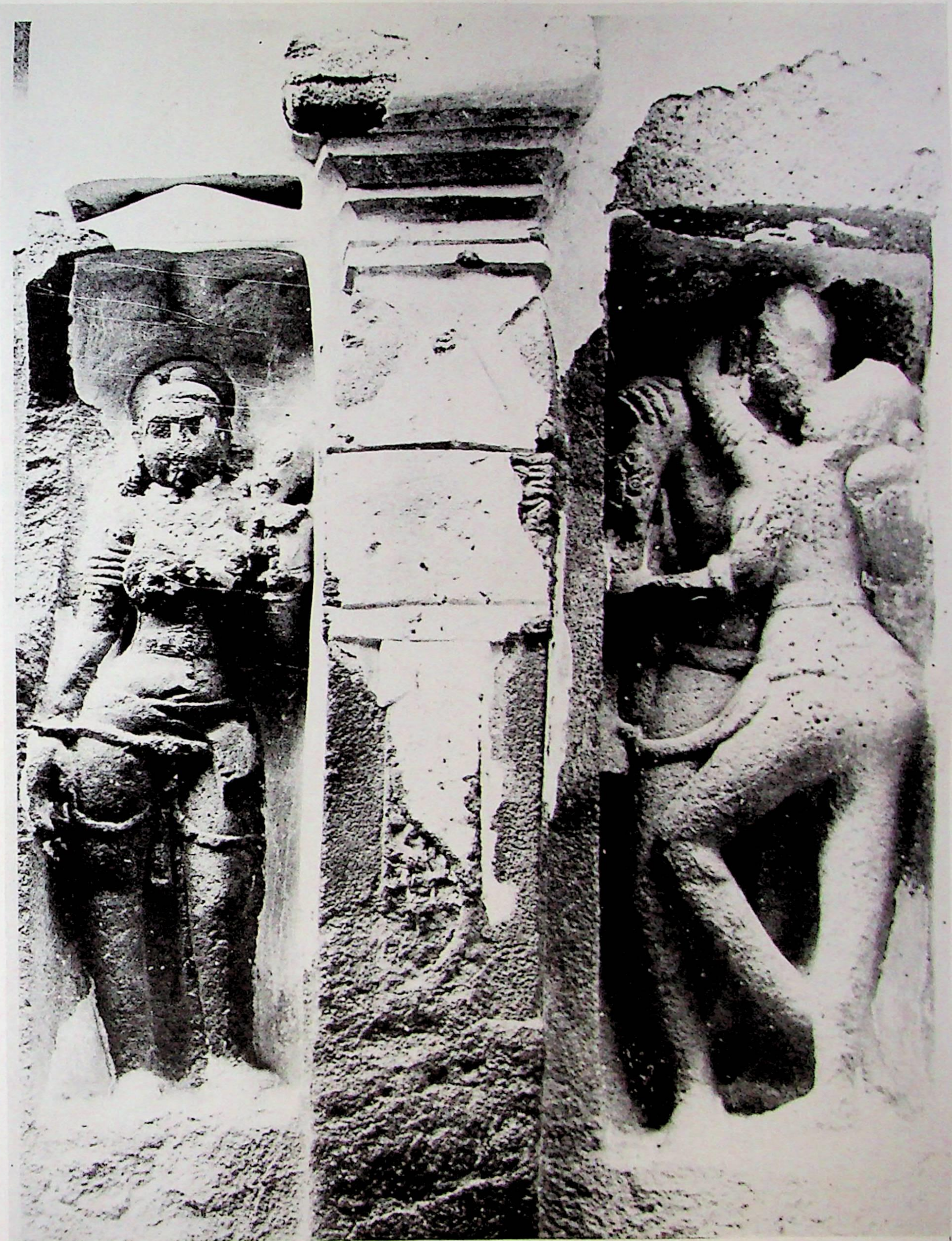
44. A female, east wall of *garbha-griha*.



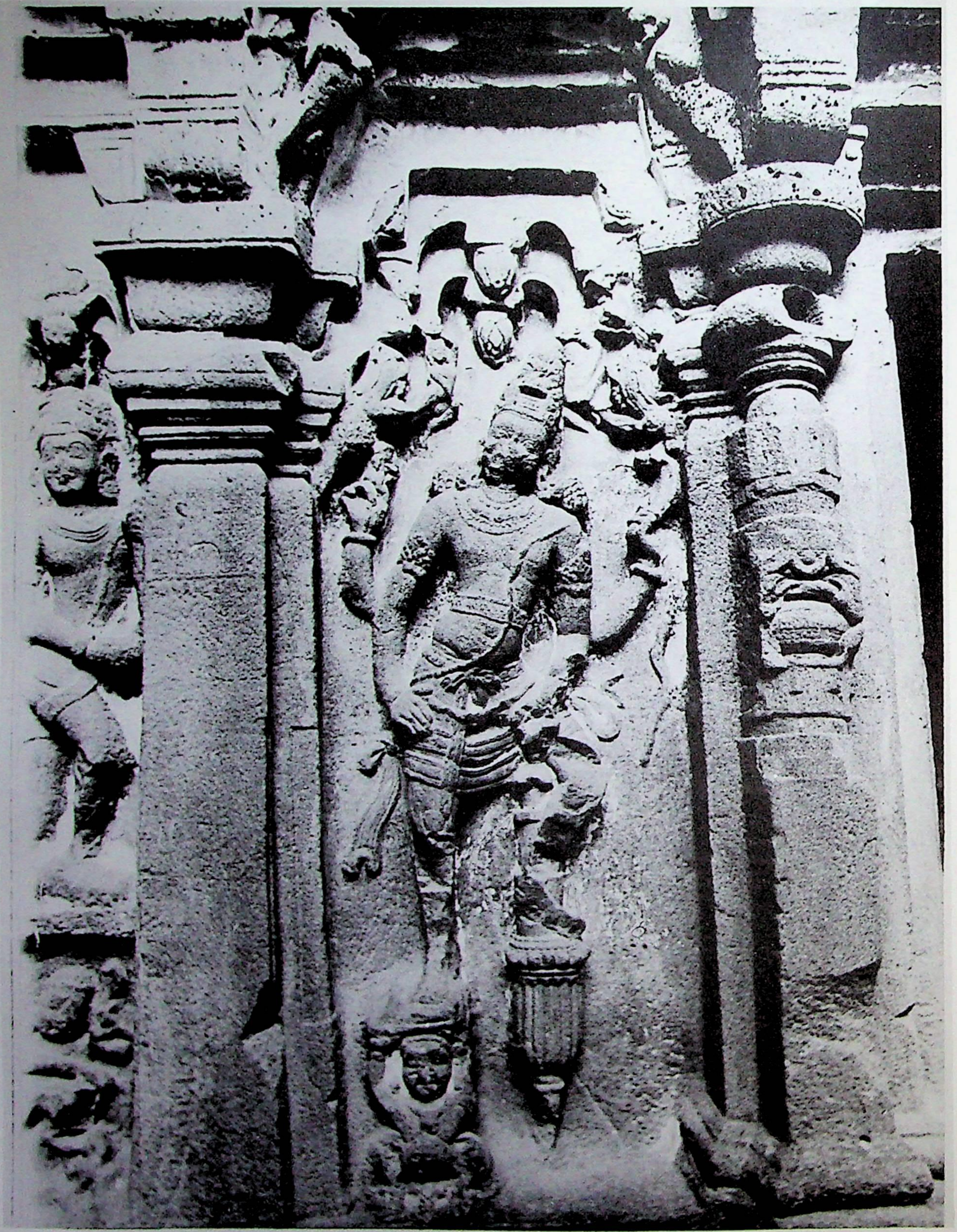
45. Siva dancing, east wall of garbha-griha.



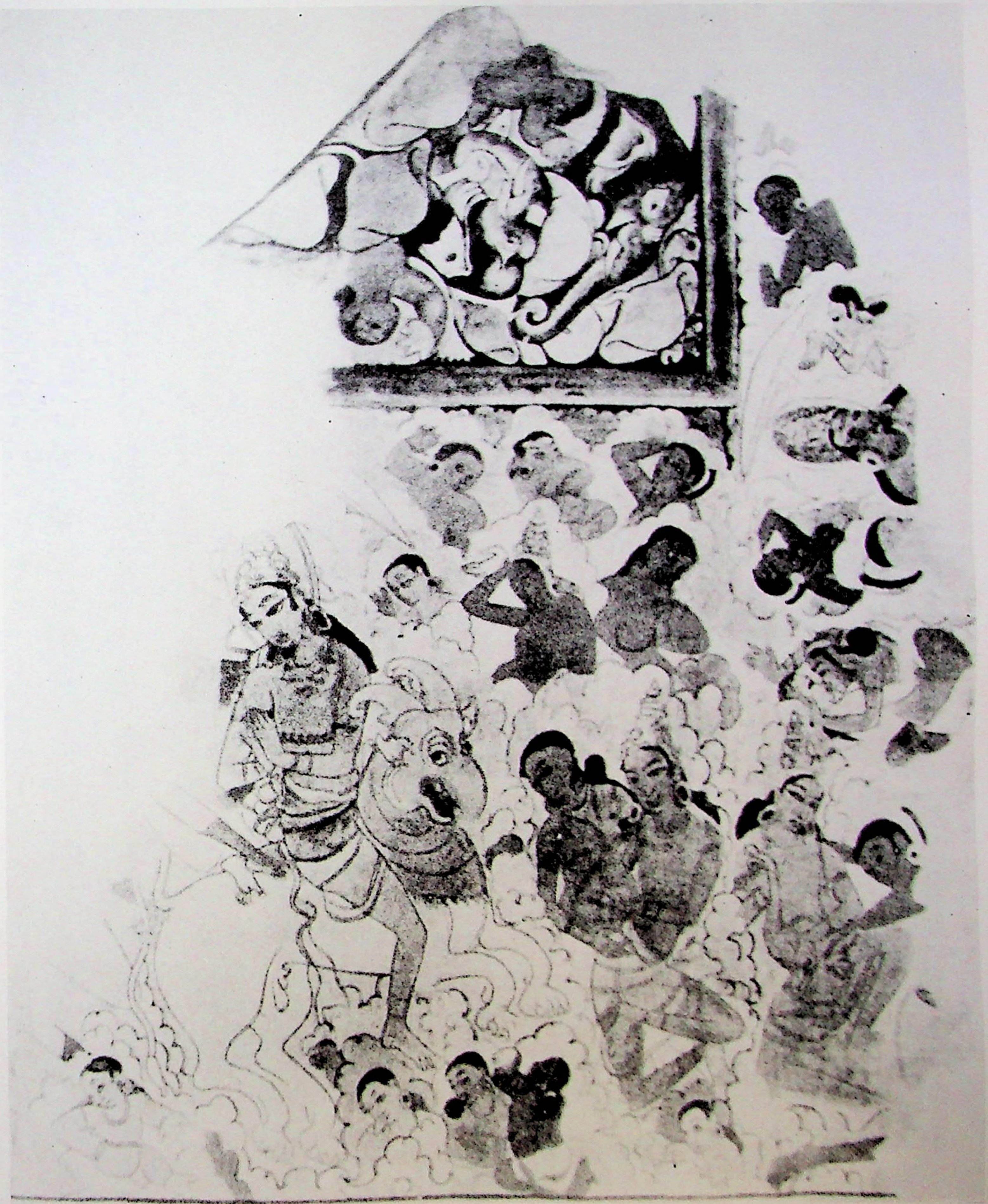
46. Siva dancing, south wall of *garbha-griha*.



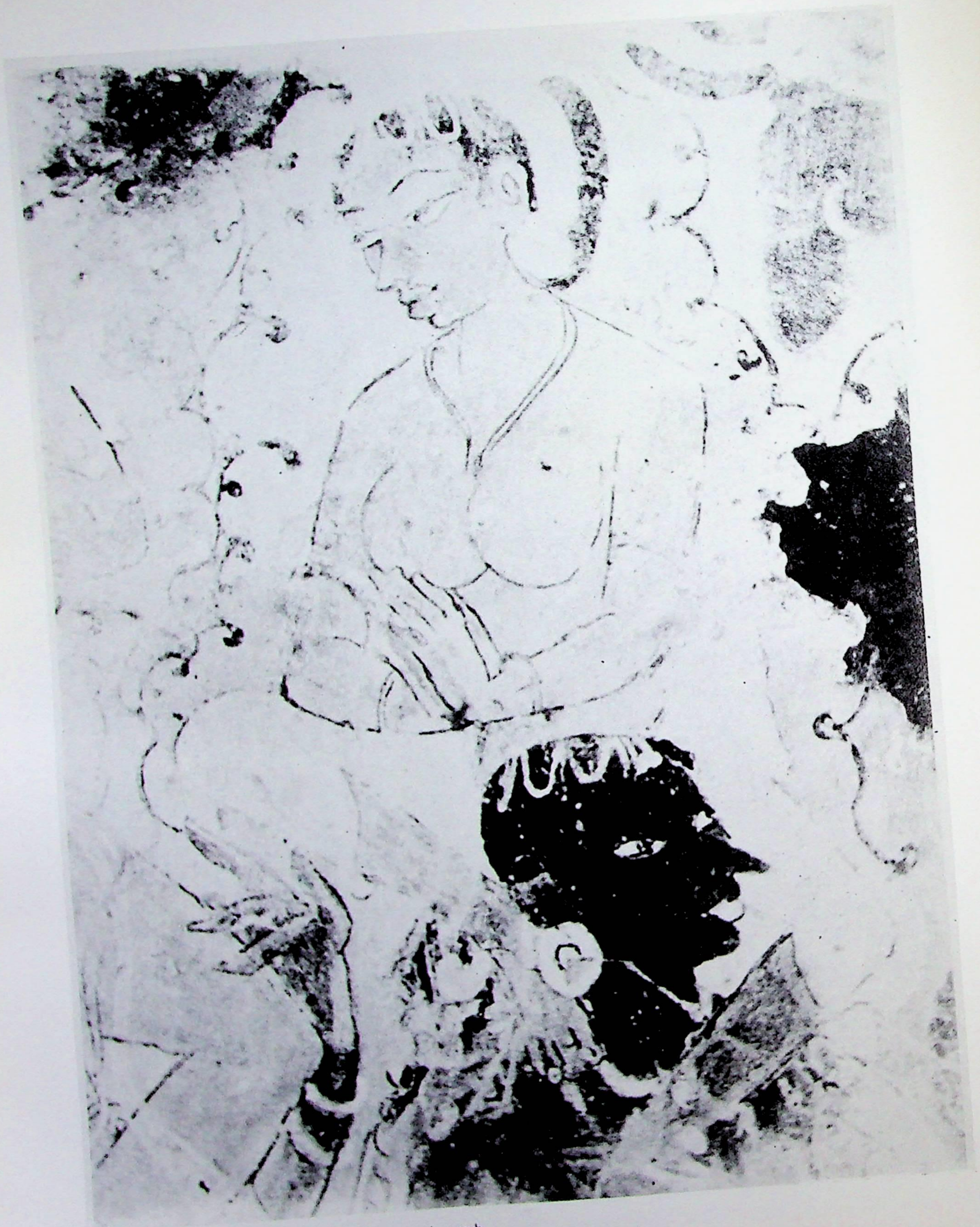
47. An amorous couple, south wall of north sub-shrine.



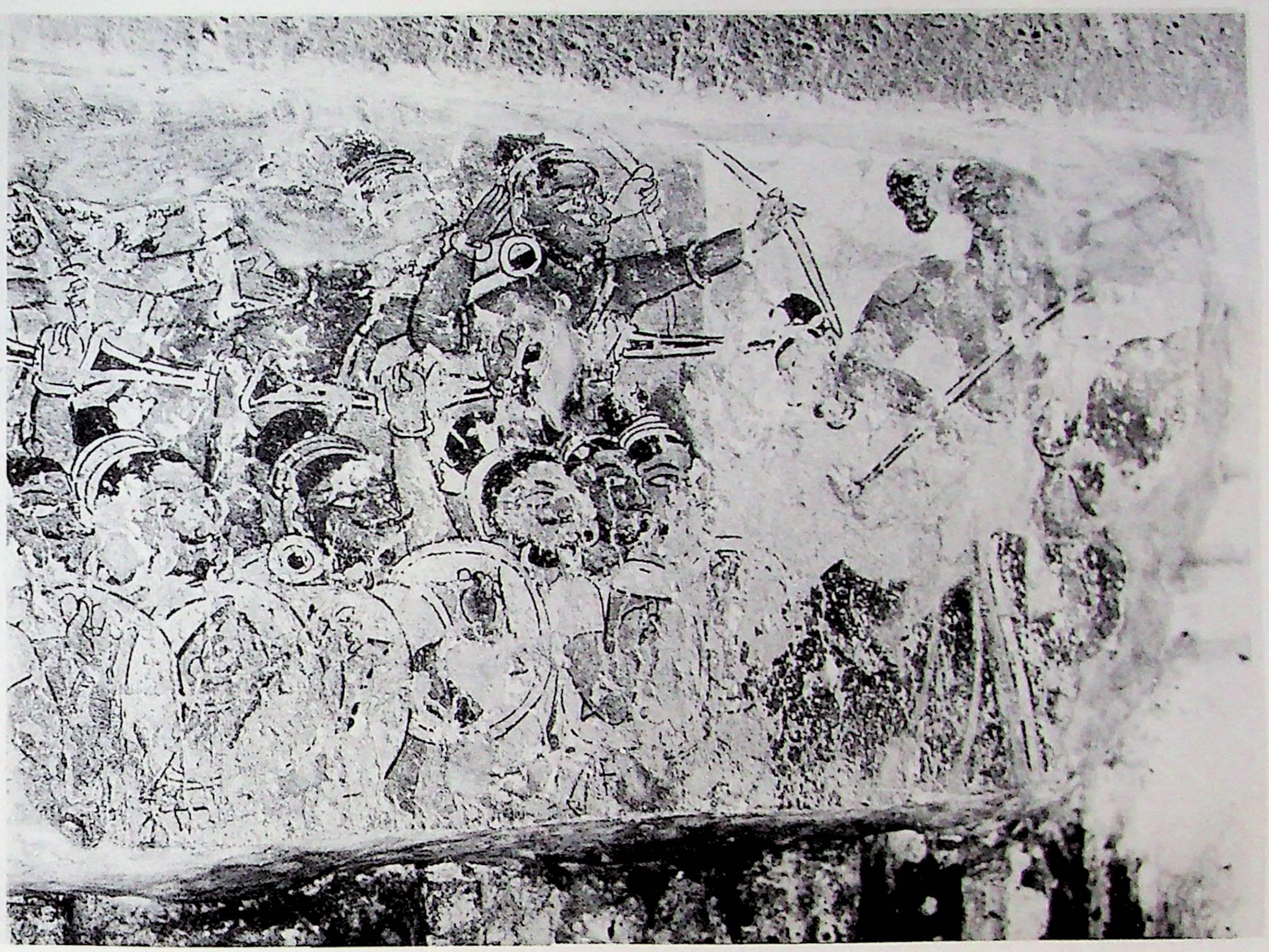
48. *Siva-dvarapala*, south-east corner of sub-shrine.



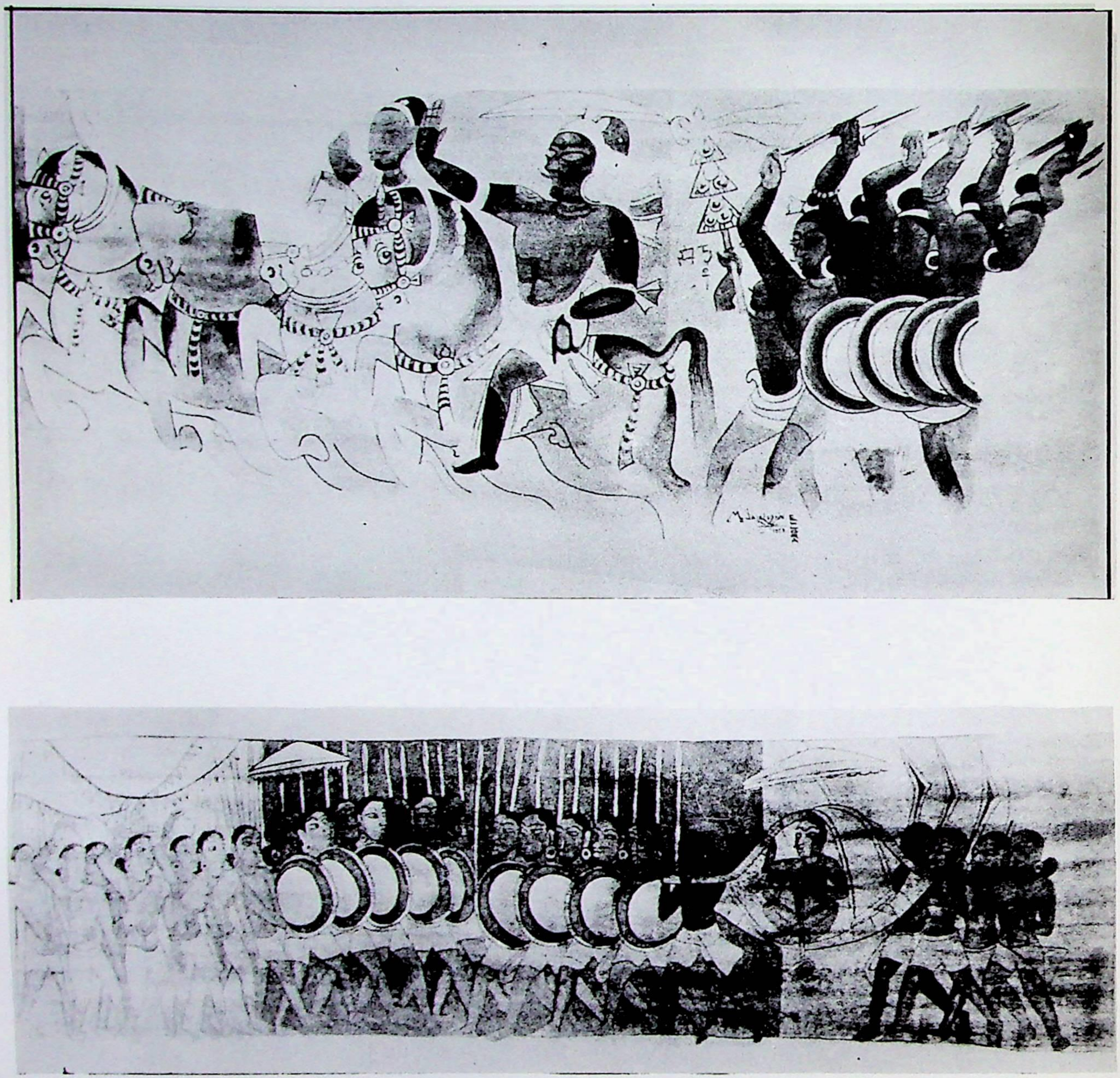
49. Paintings on the ceiling of main porch.



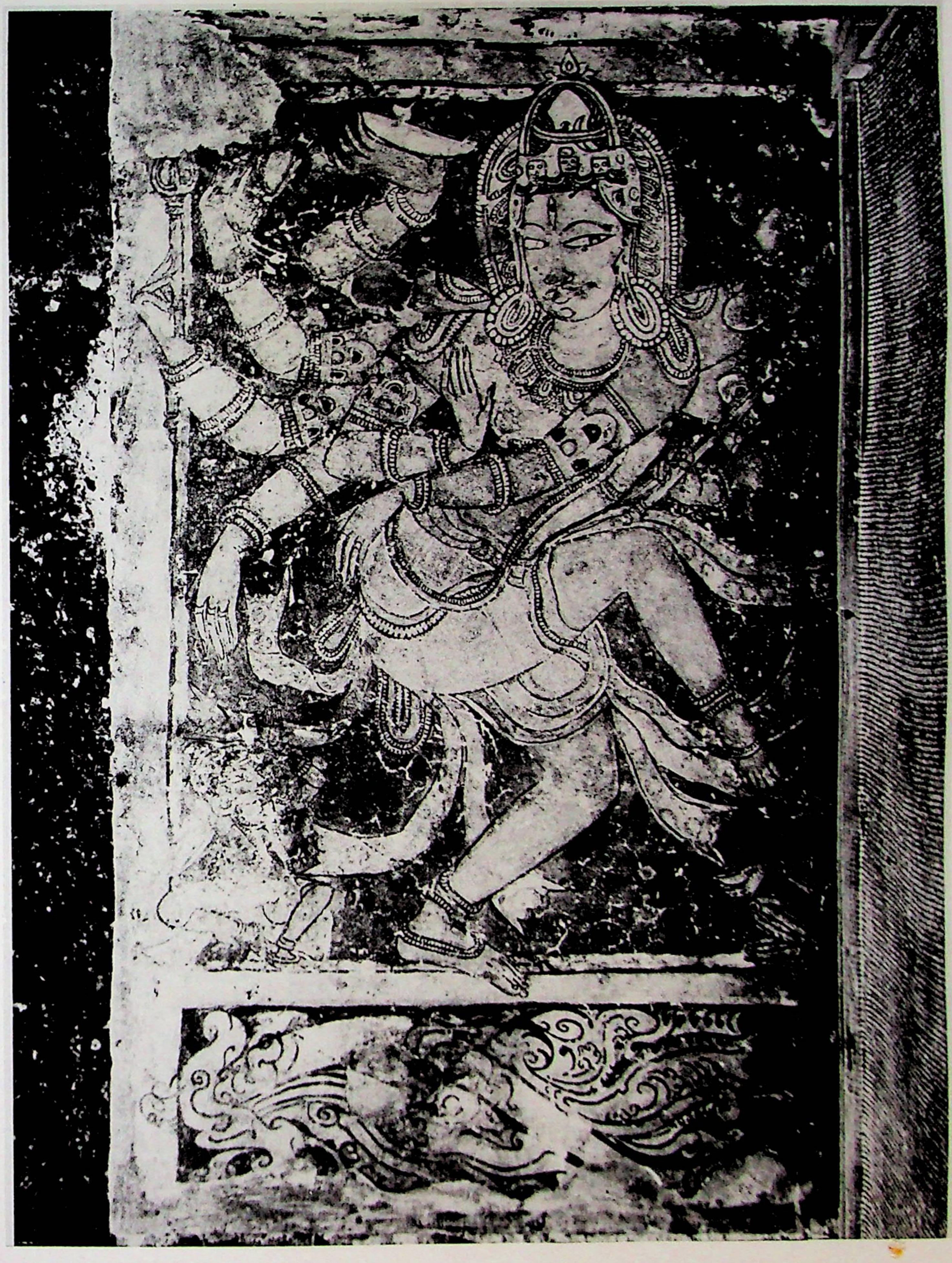
50. A painted panel showing a lady, ceiling of main porch.



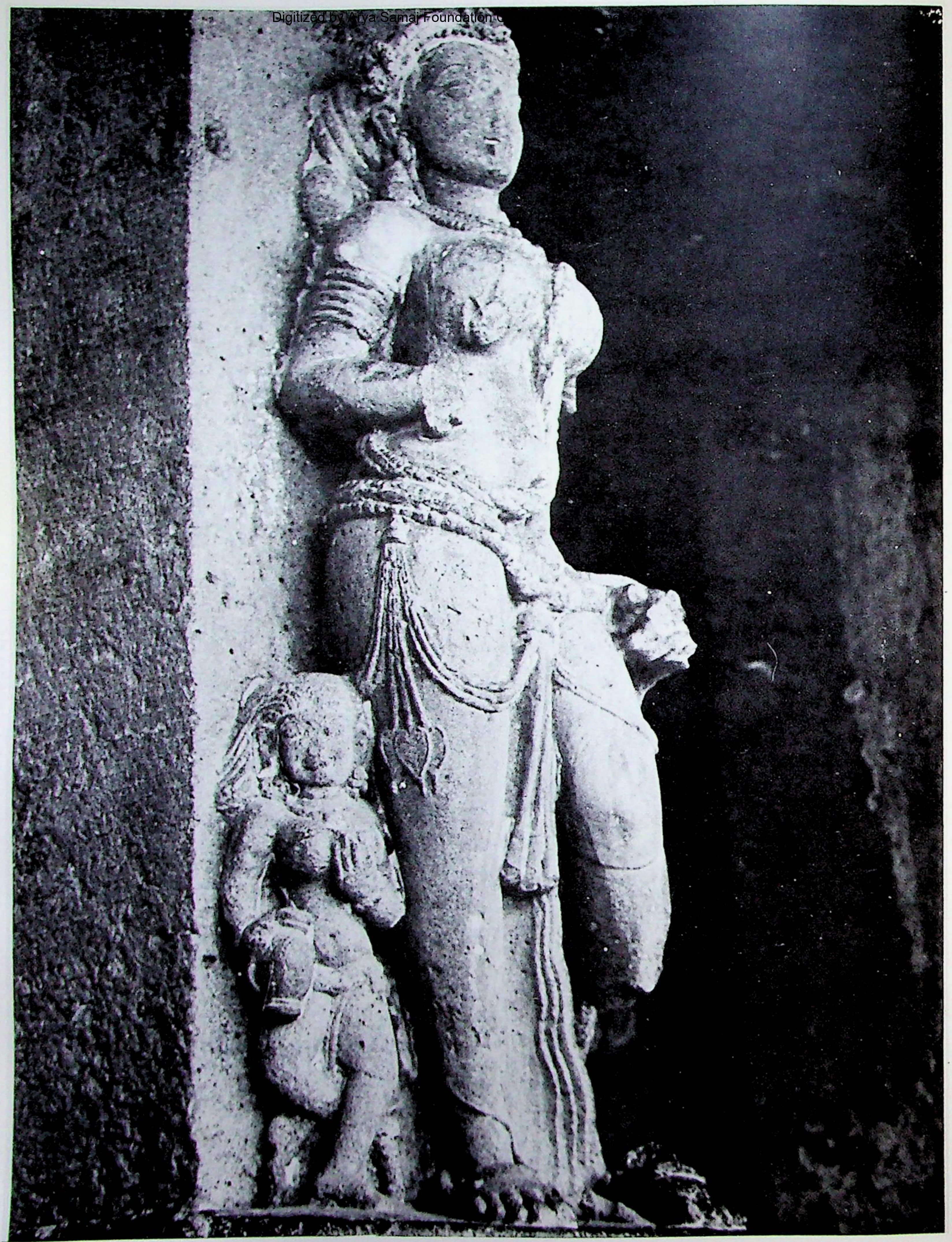
51. Paintings in the main porch, battle scene.



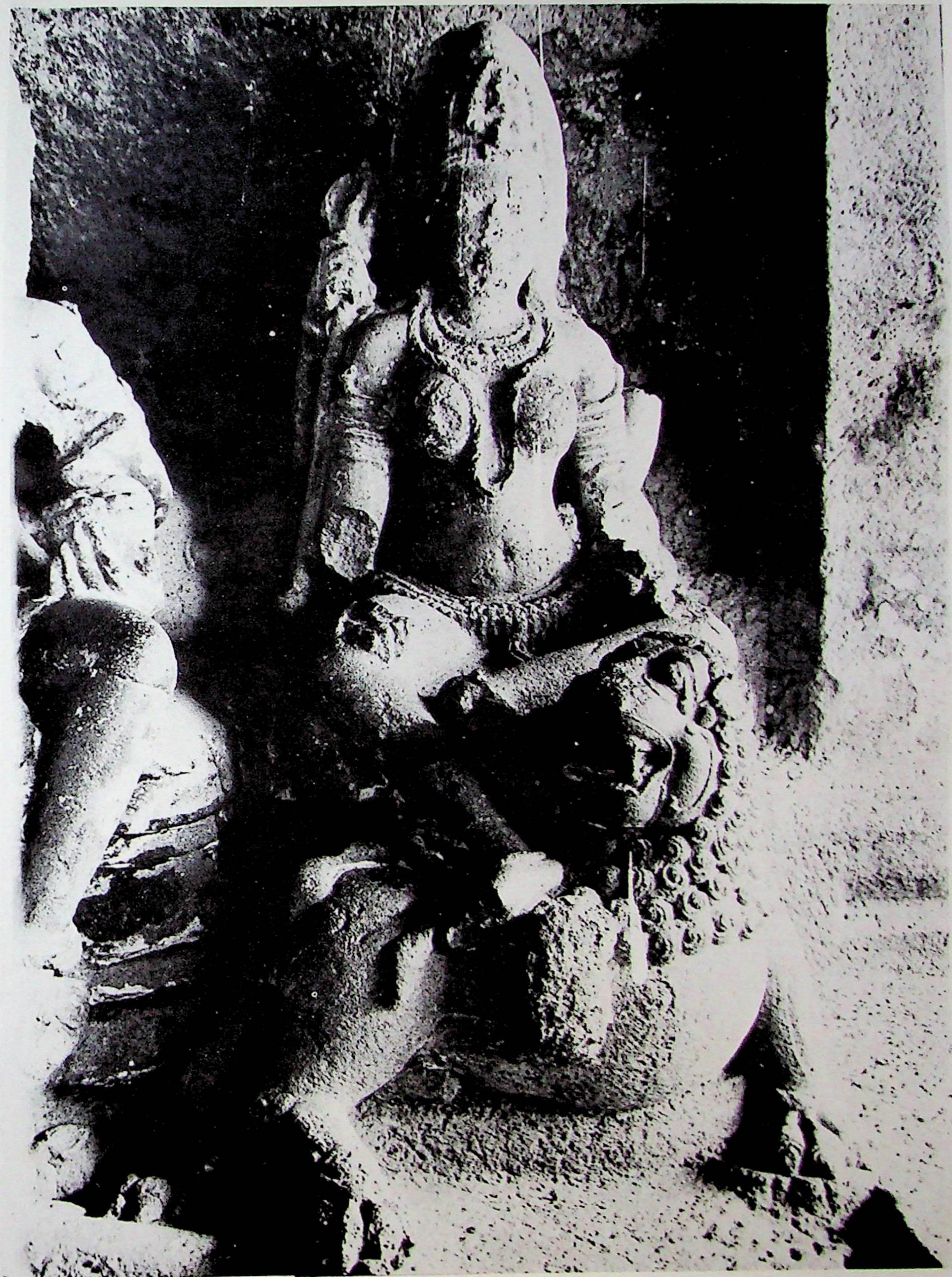
52. Paintings in the main porch. A, battle scene; B, a king and soldiers.



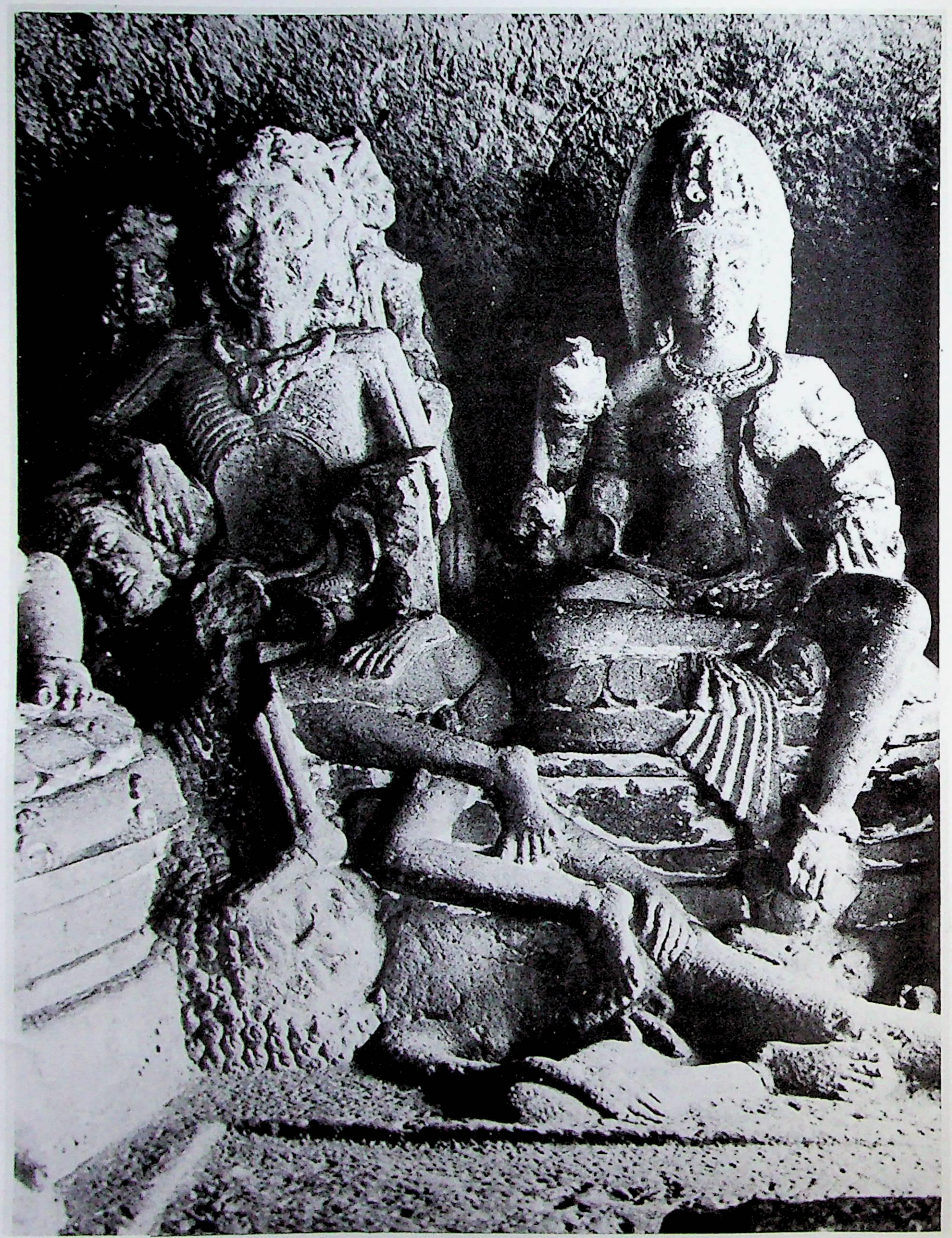
53. Painting in the hall, Siva dancing.



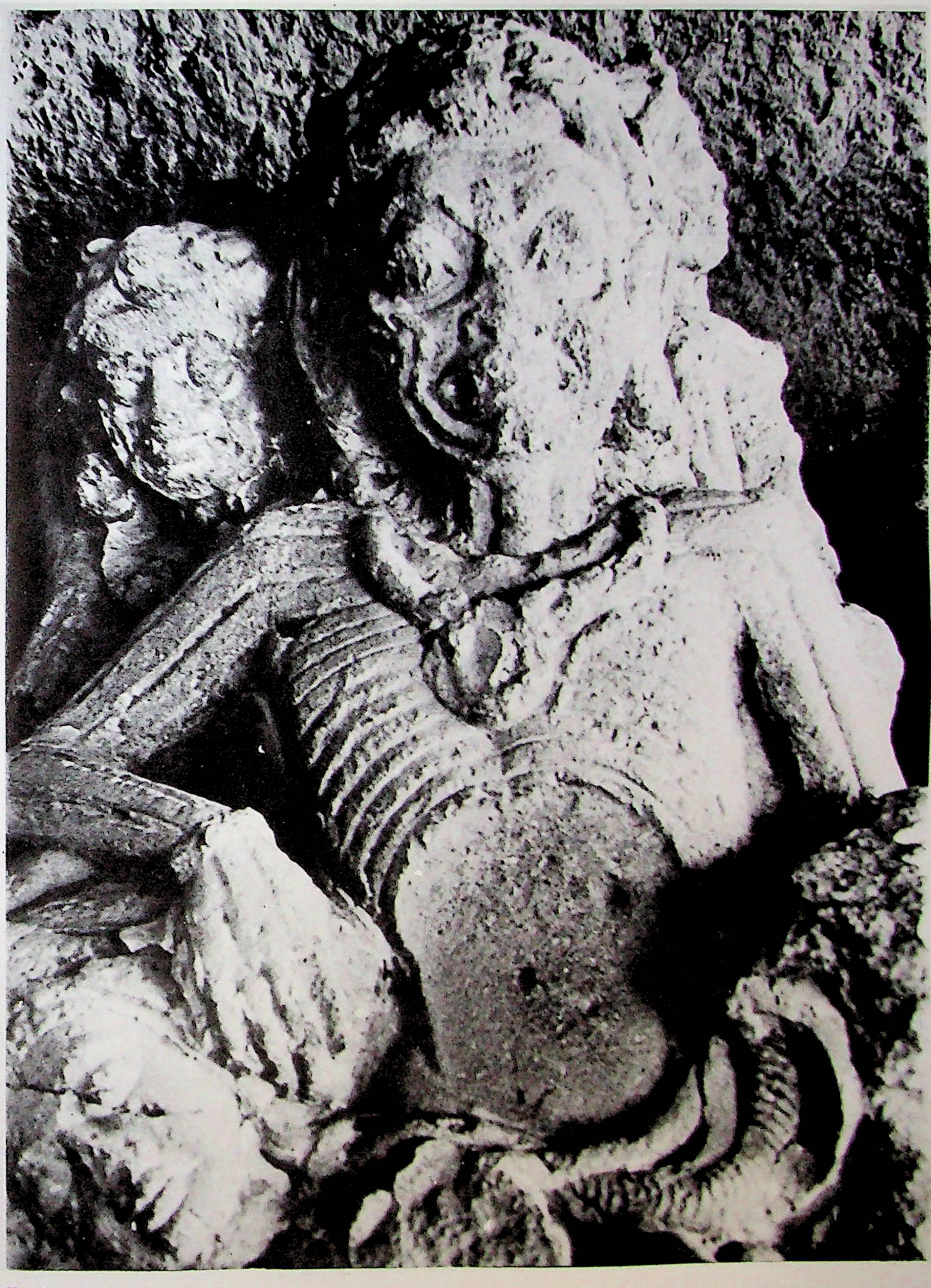
54. A female door-keeper with a dwarf, *Yajna-shala*



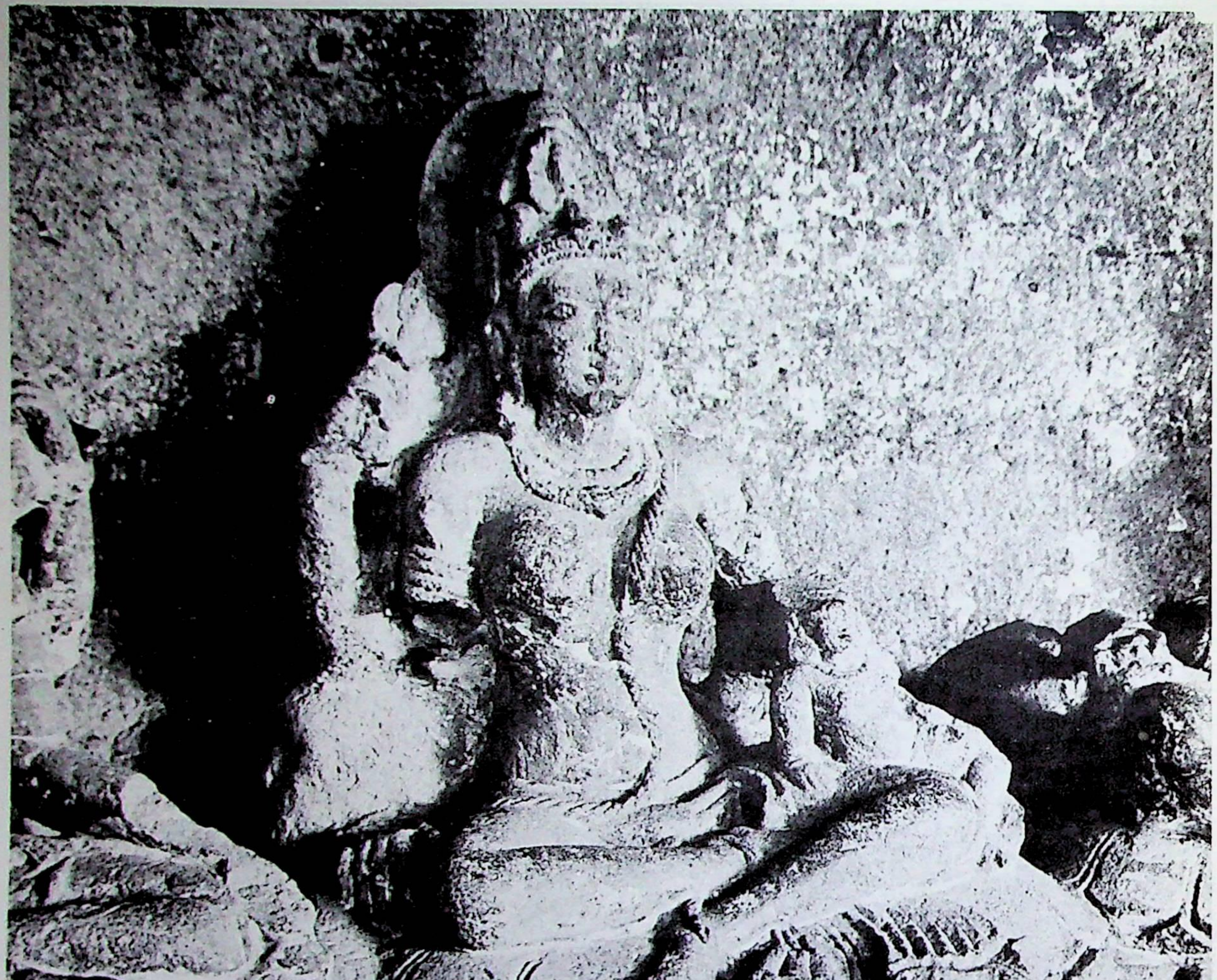
55. Durga, *Yajna-shala*.



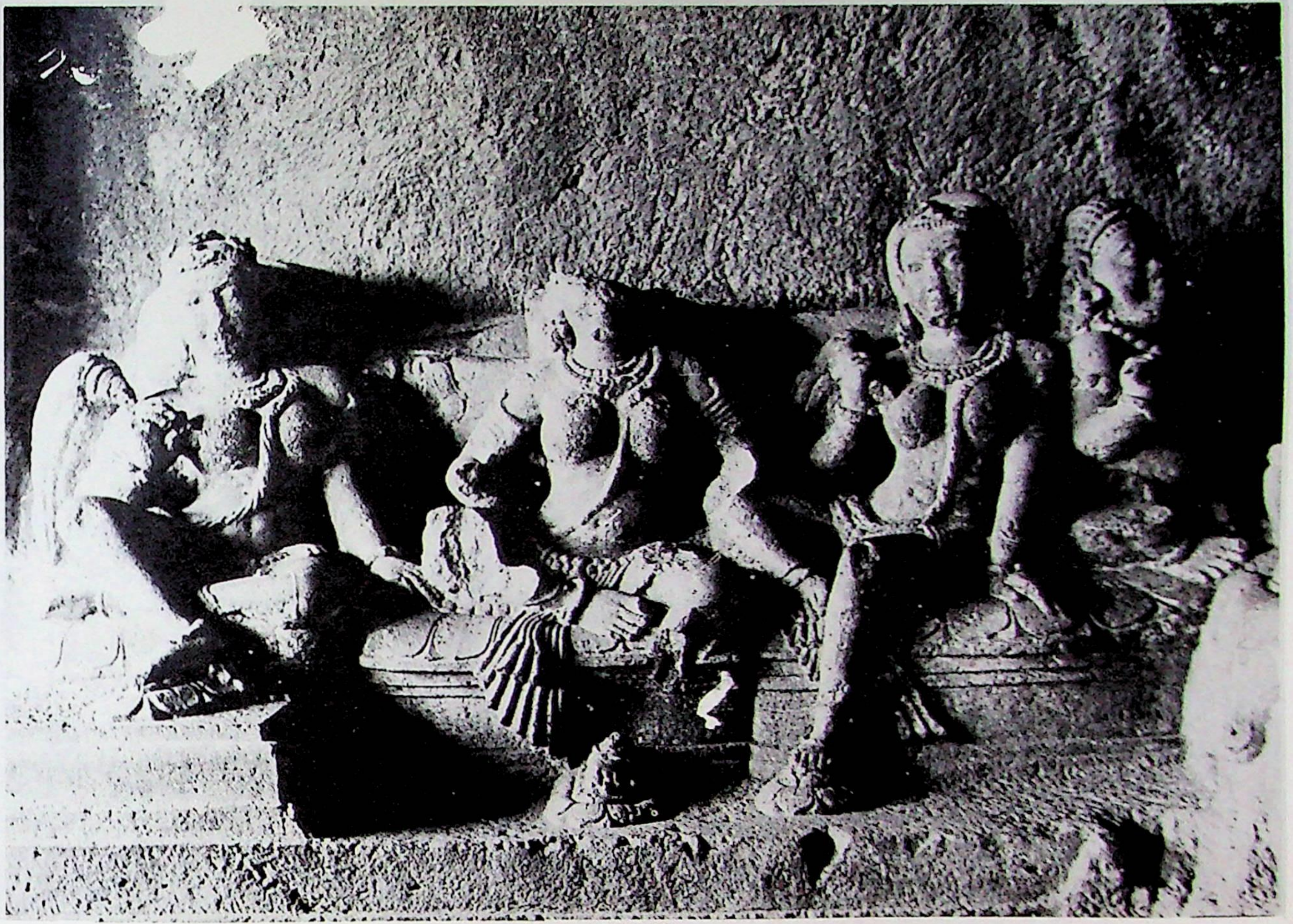
56. Mother-goddesses, Kali on left, *Yajna-shala*.



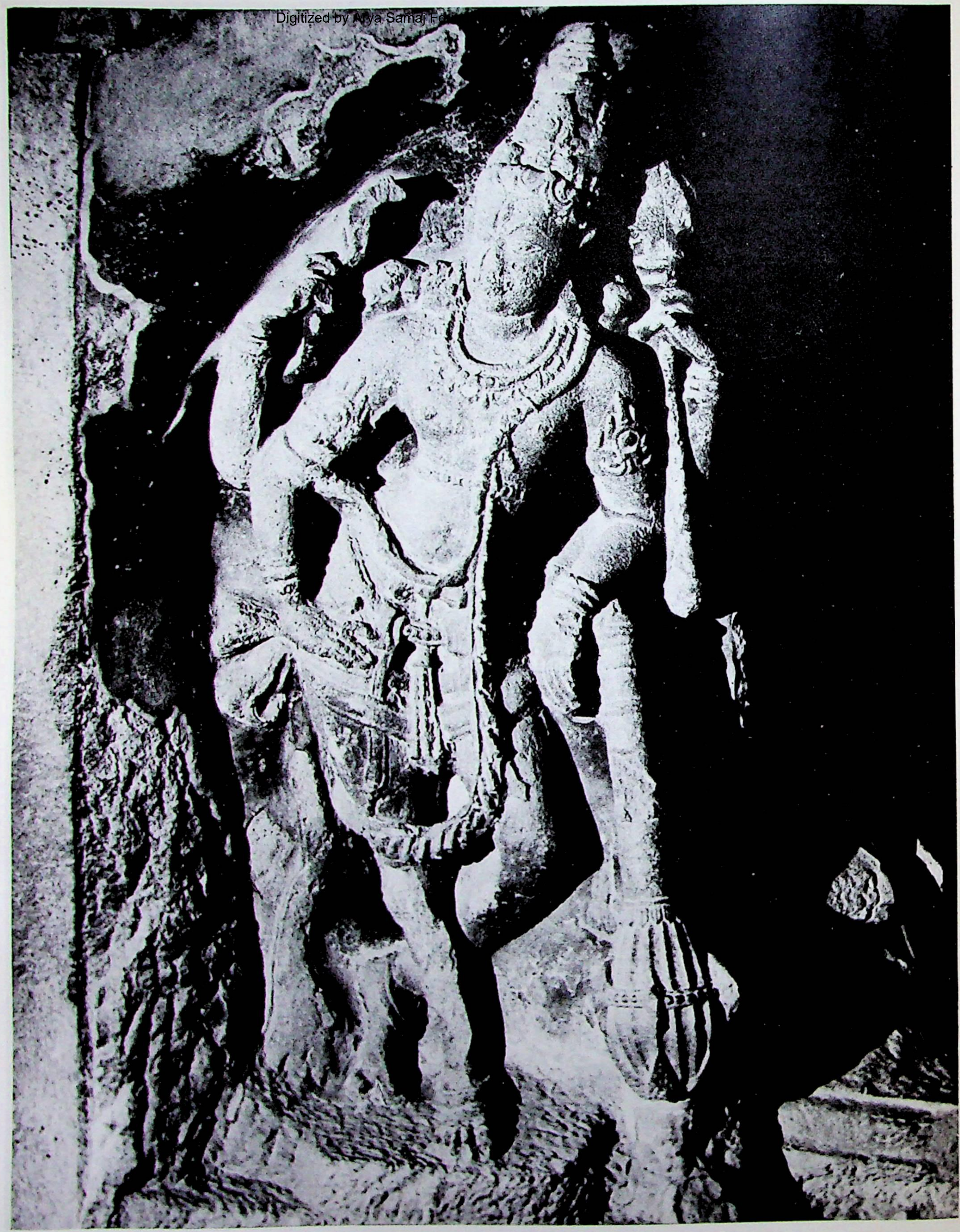
57. Kala, *Yajna-shala*.



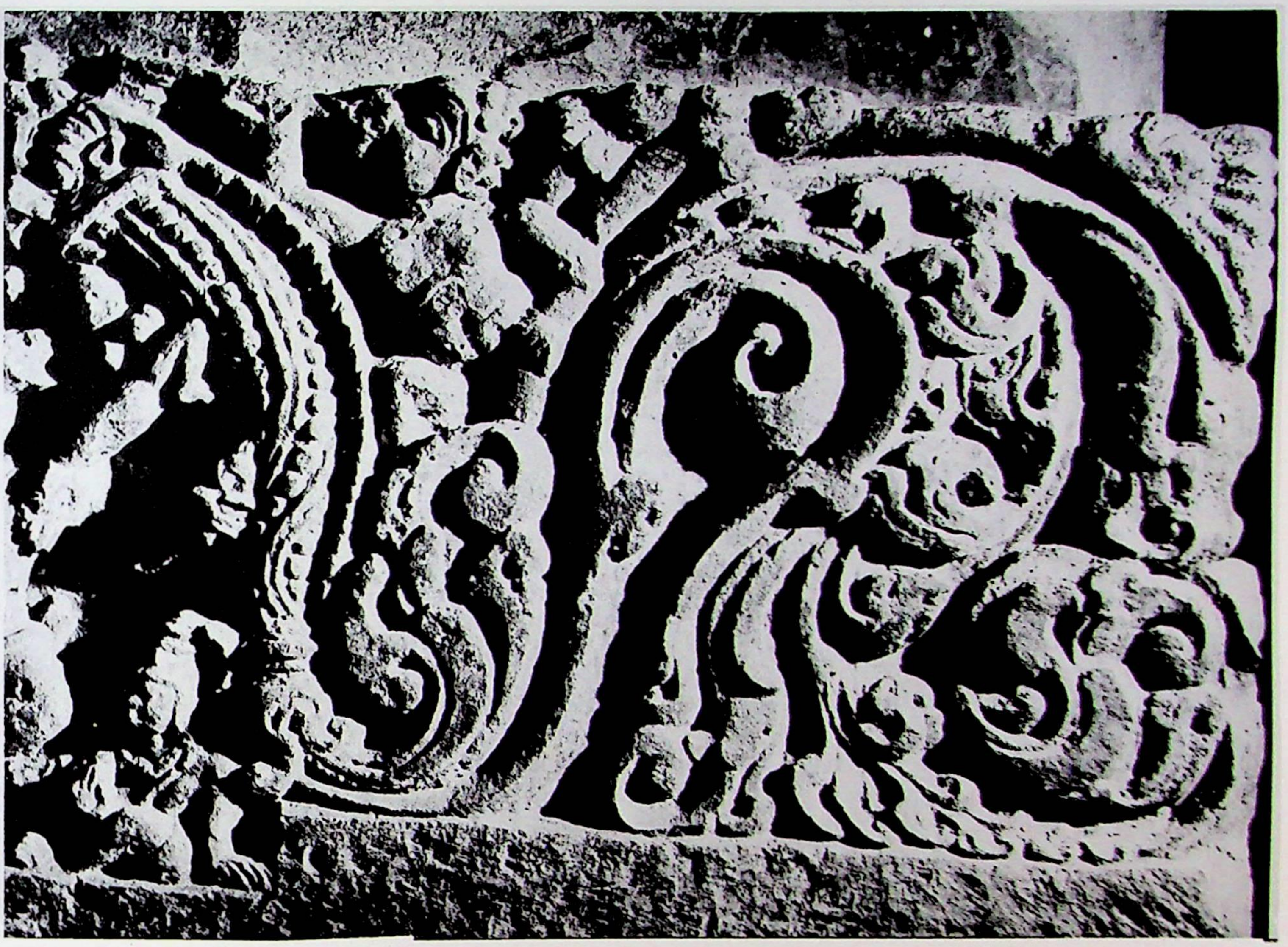
58. Maheshwari, *Yajna-shala.*



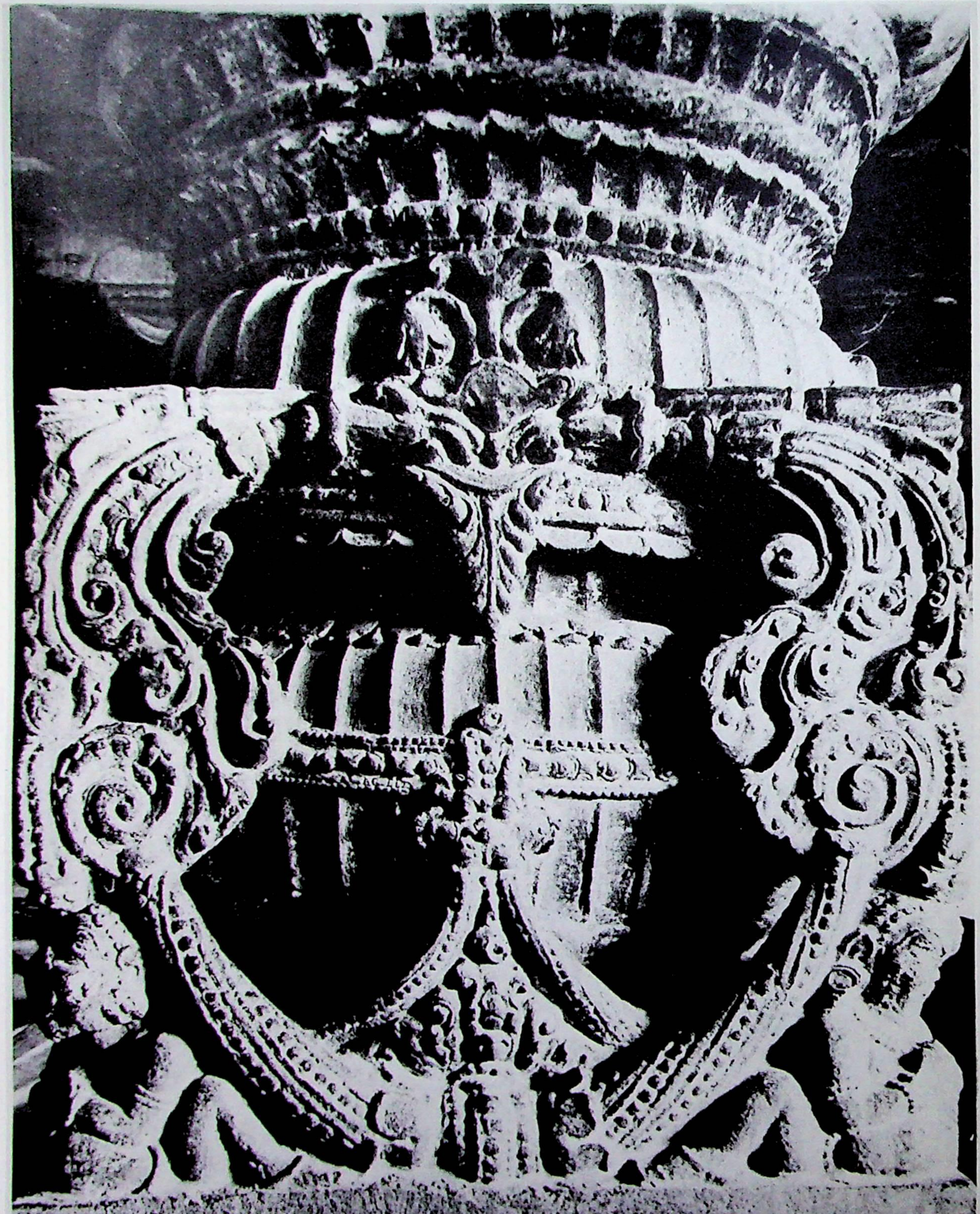
59. Rashtrakuta queen with attendants, *Yajna-shala*.



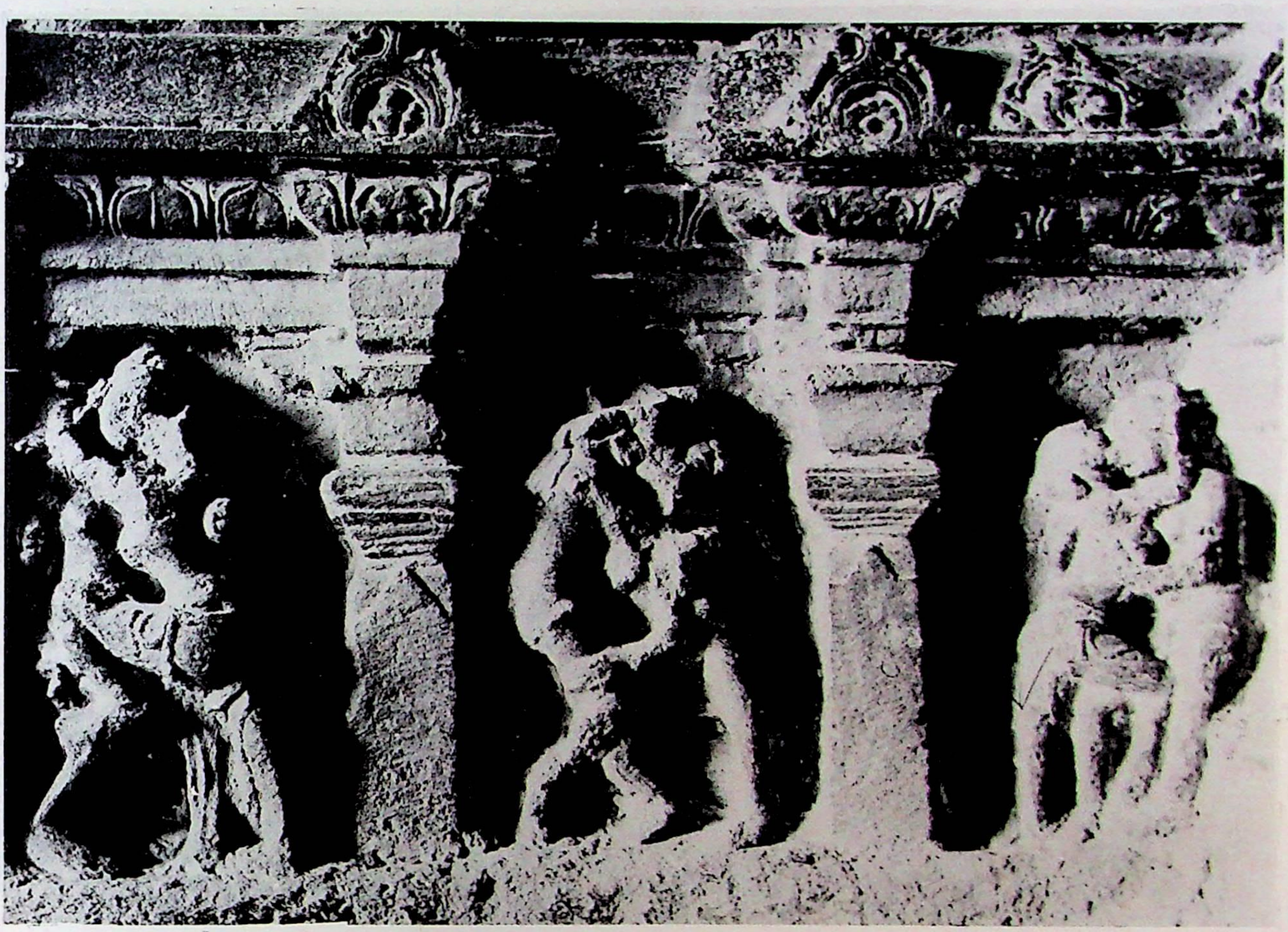
60. *Siva-dvarapala,* Lankeshwar.



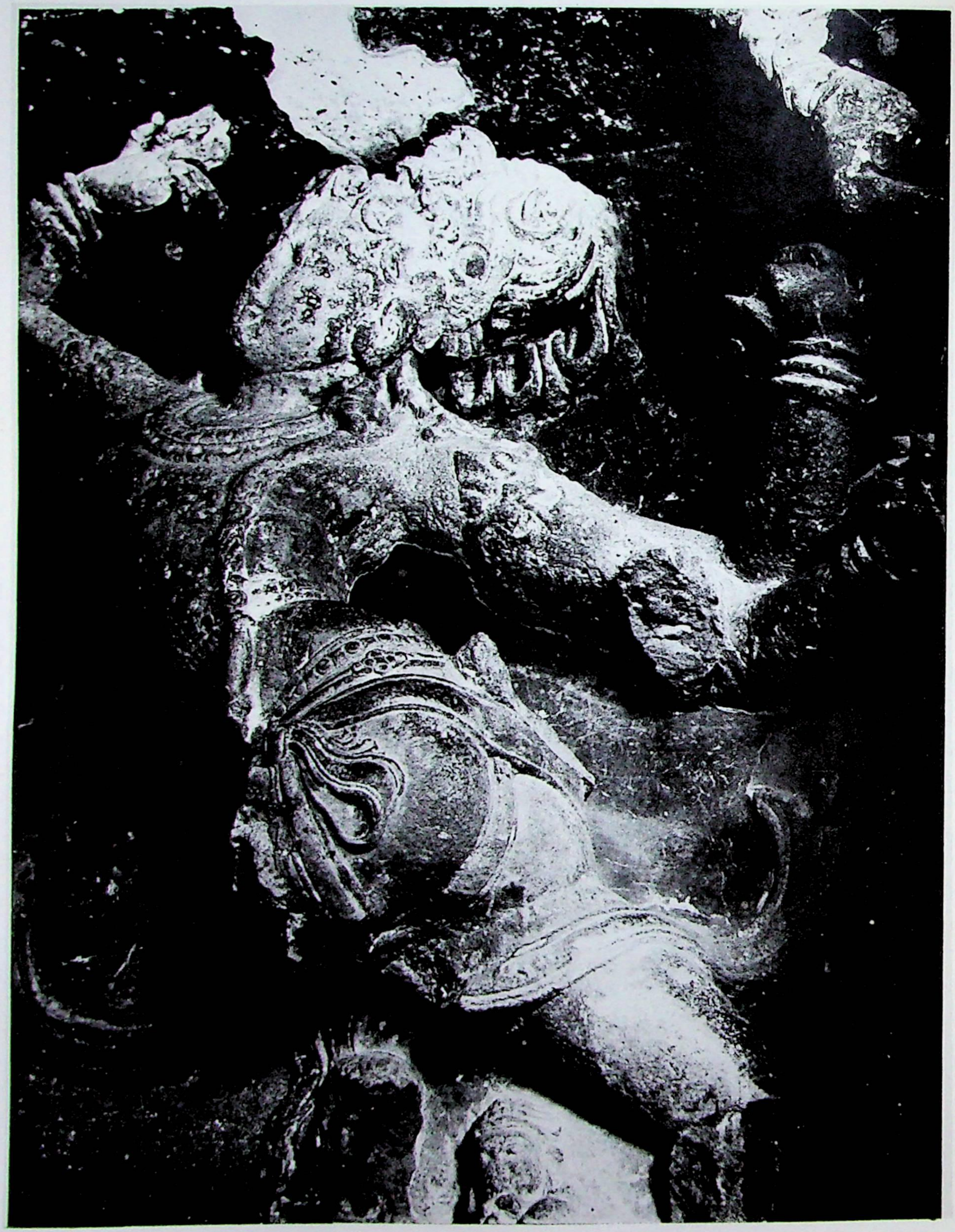
61. A pillar in Lankeshwar details.



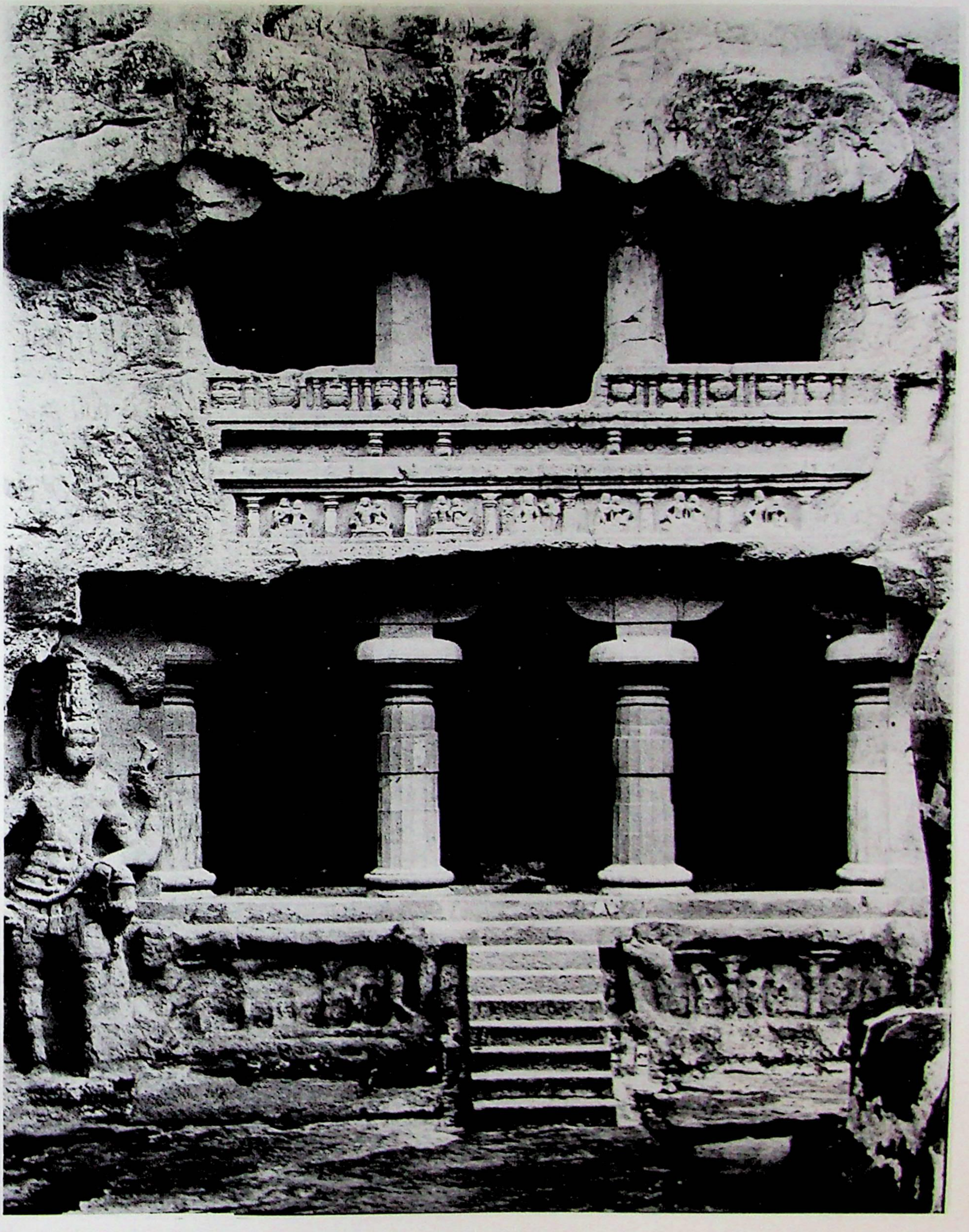
62. Vase-and-foliage pillar, capital, Lankeshwar.



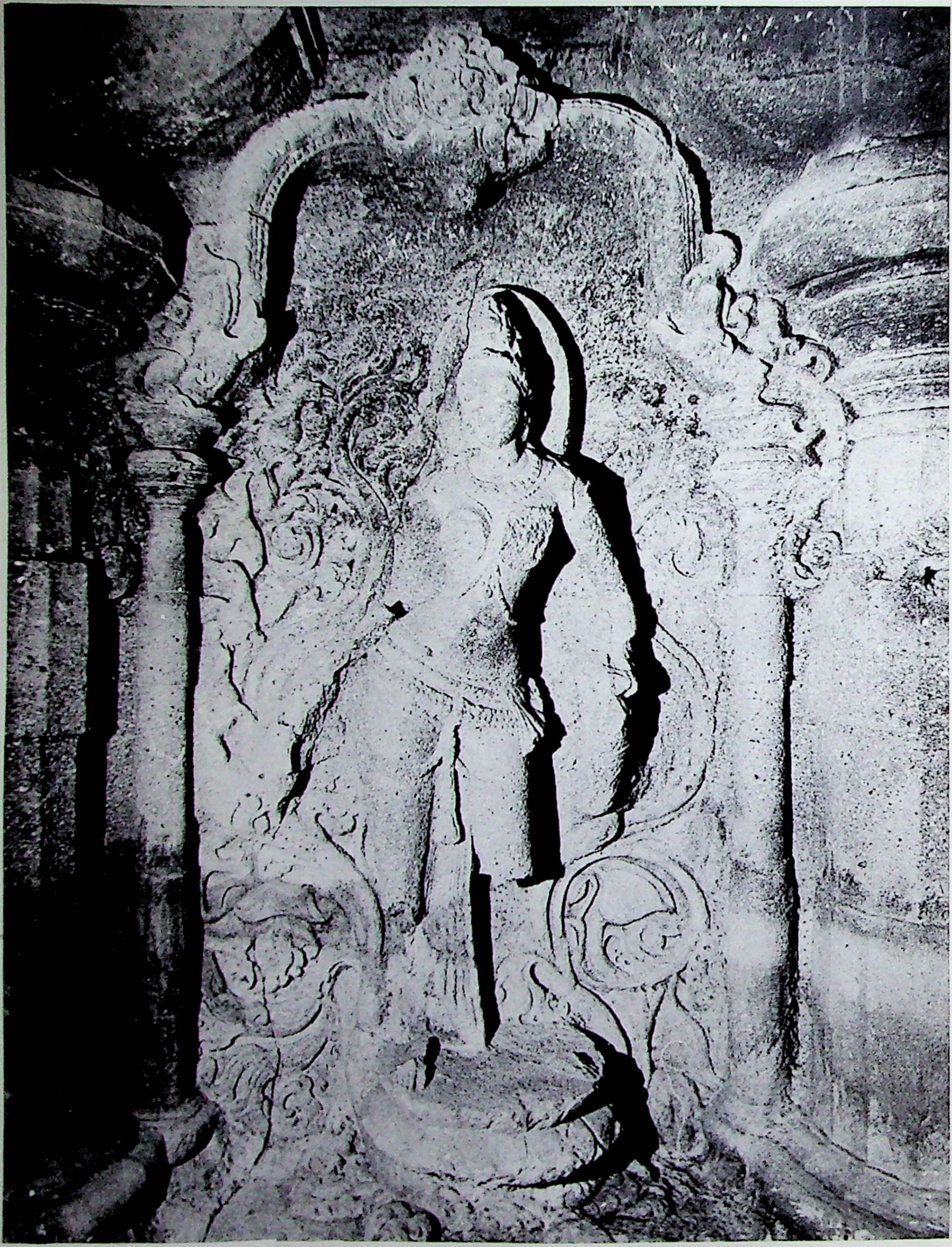
63. Amorous couples, Lankeshwar.



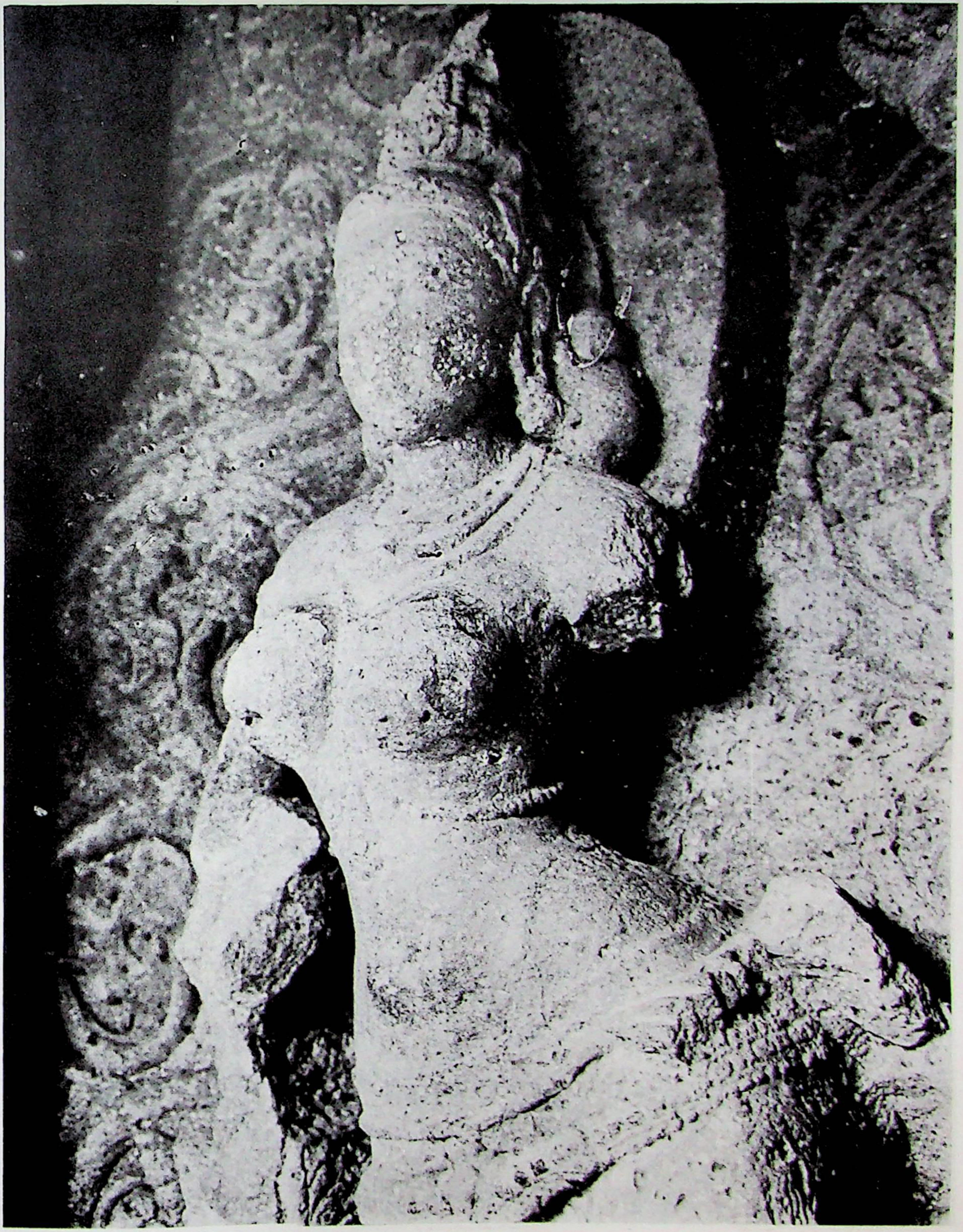
64. Siva dancing, Lankeshwar.



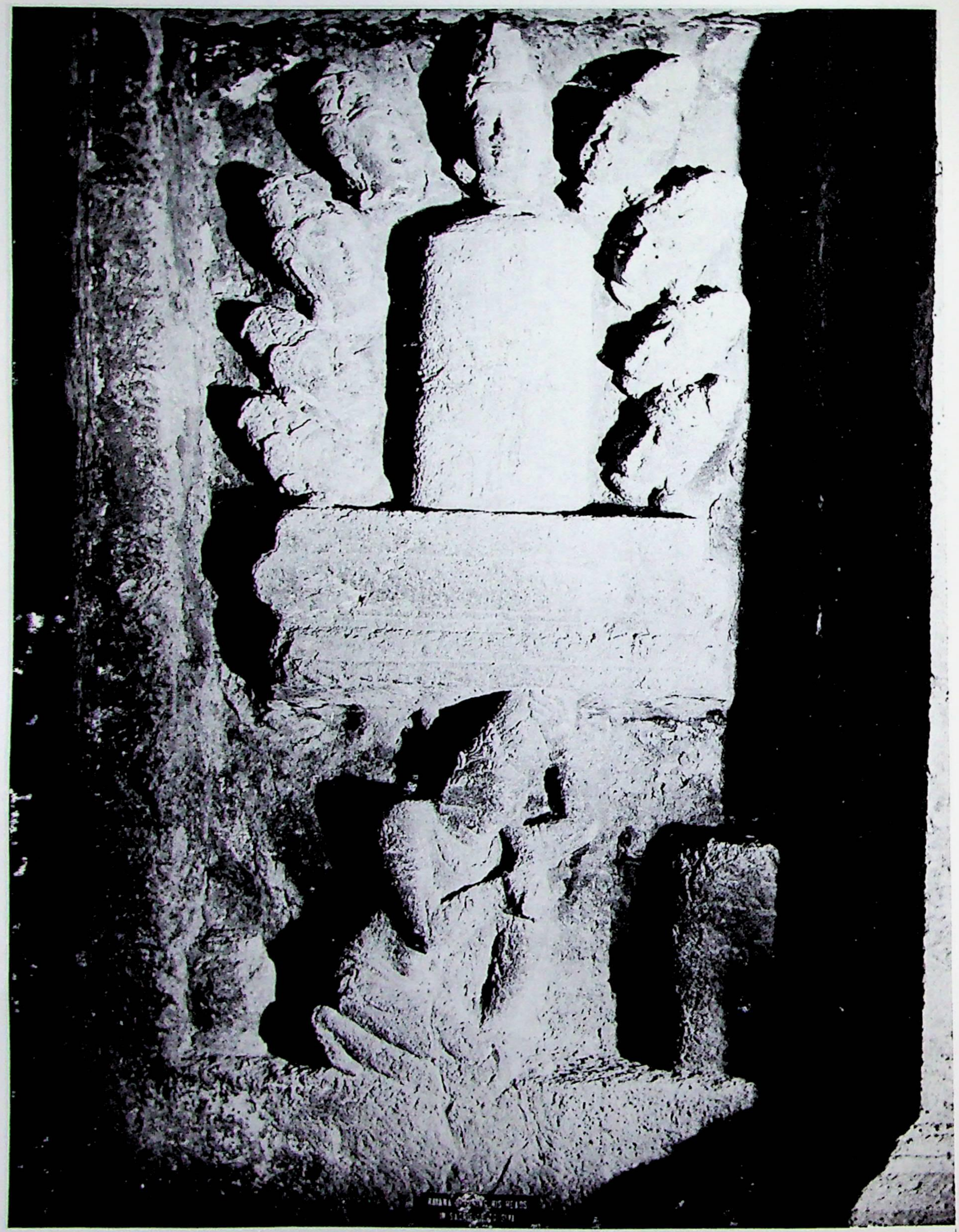
65. River-goddess chapel.



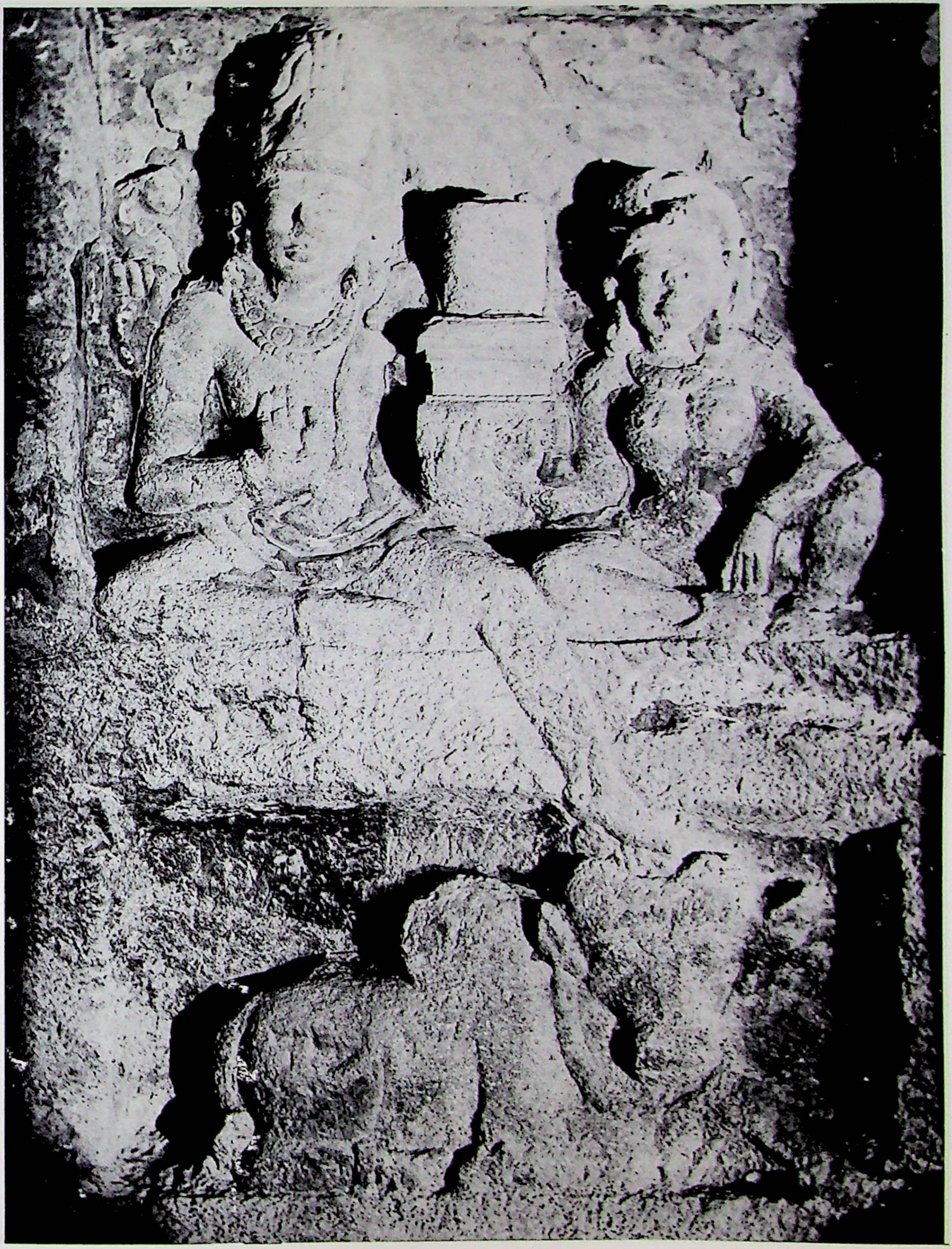
66. Saraswati, River-goddess chapel.



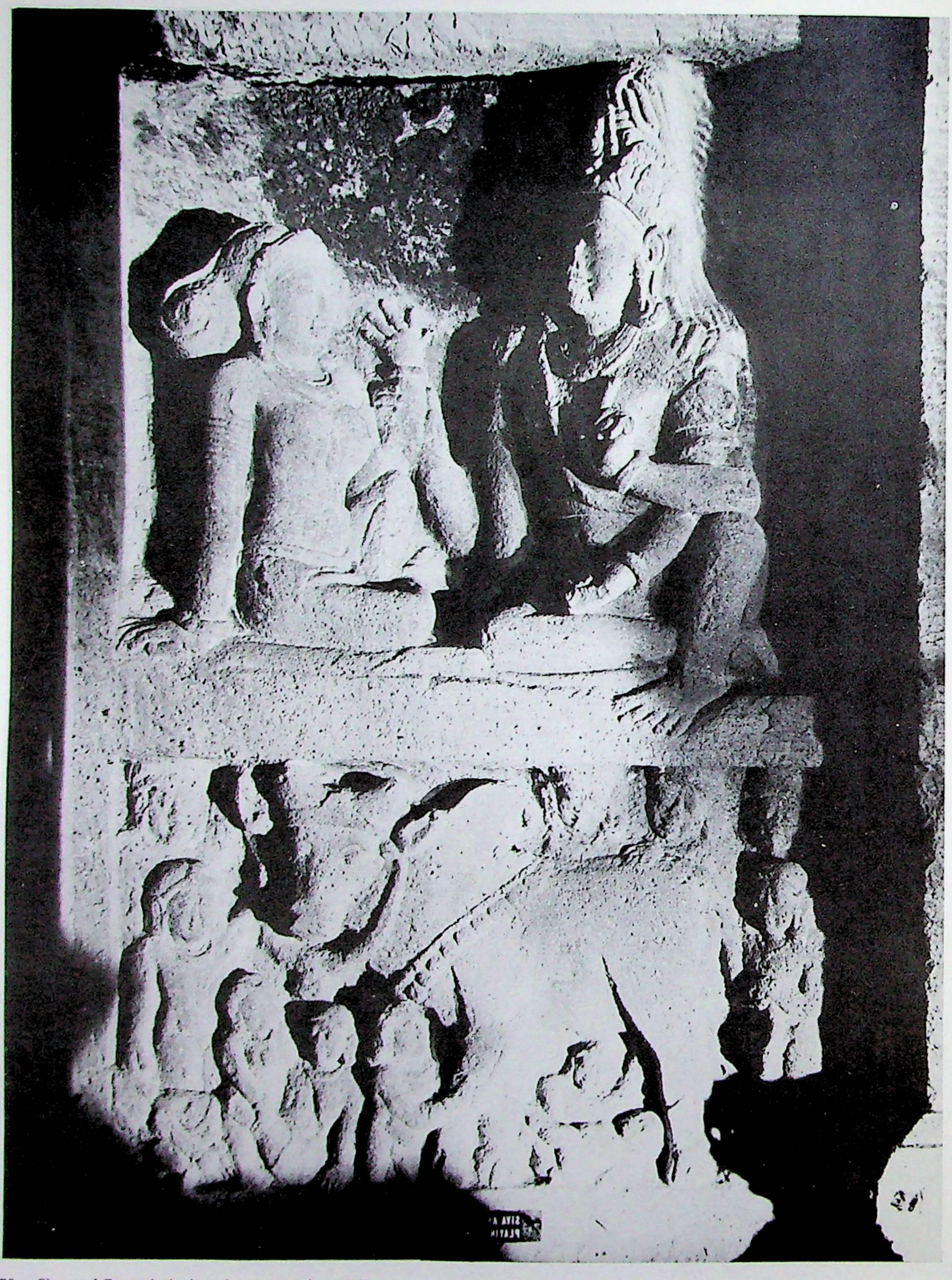
67. Yamuna, River-goddess chapel.


RAVANA [illegible] HIS HEADS
IN SA[illegible] TO SIVA

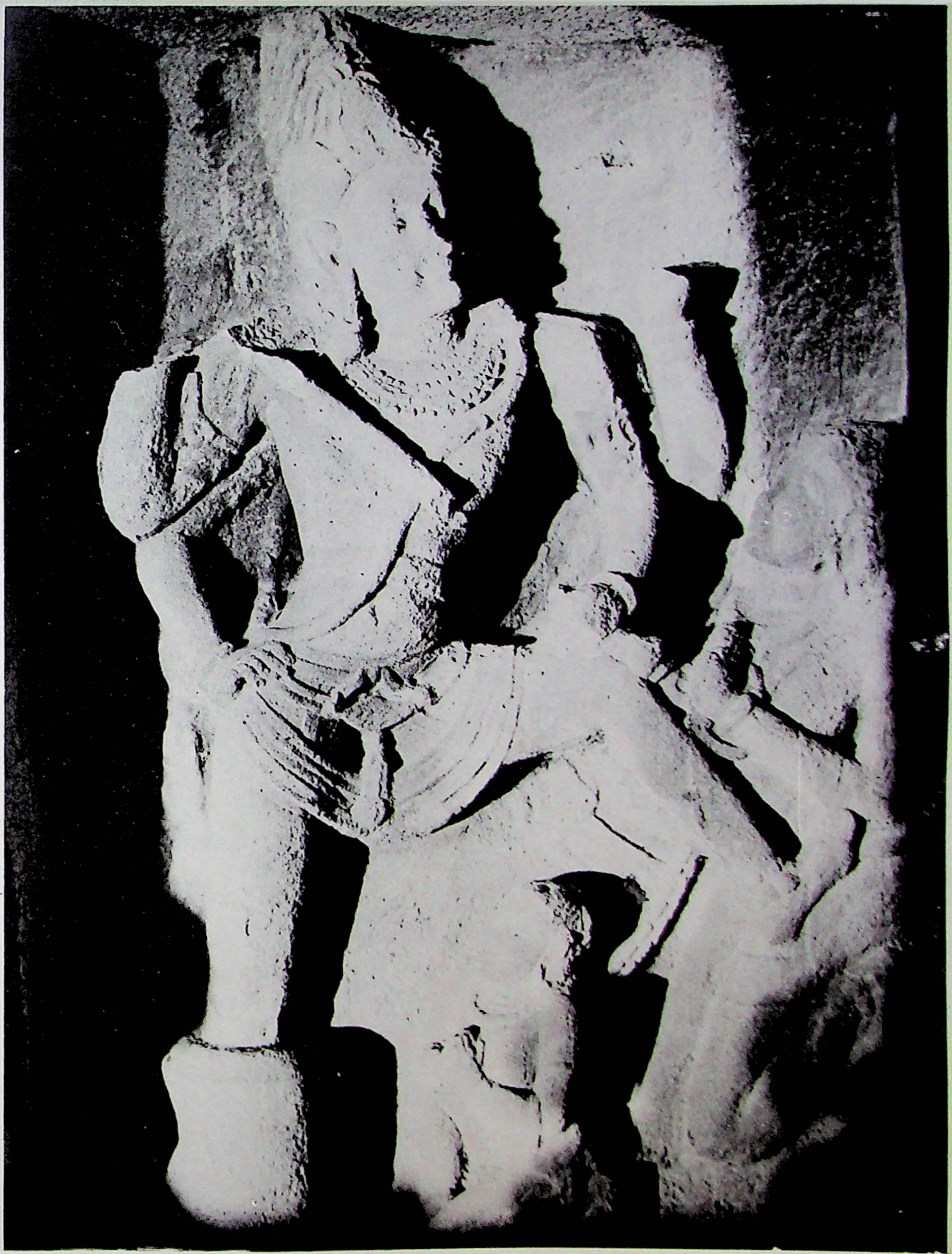
68. Ravana offering his heads to Siva, northern gallery.



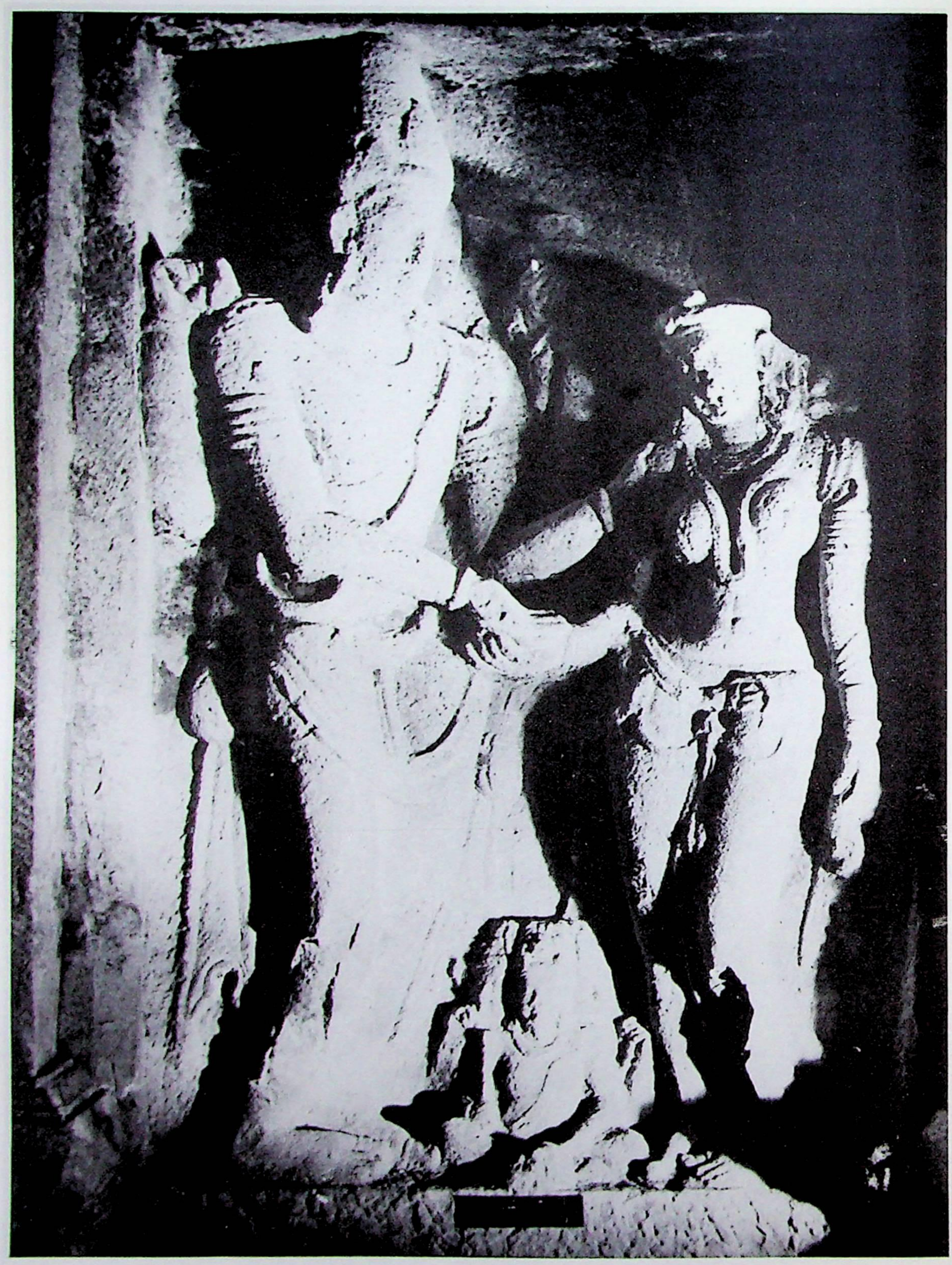
69. Siva and Parvati, northern gallery.



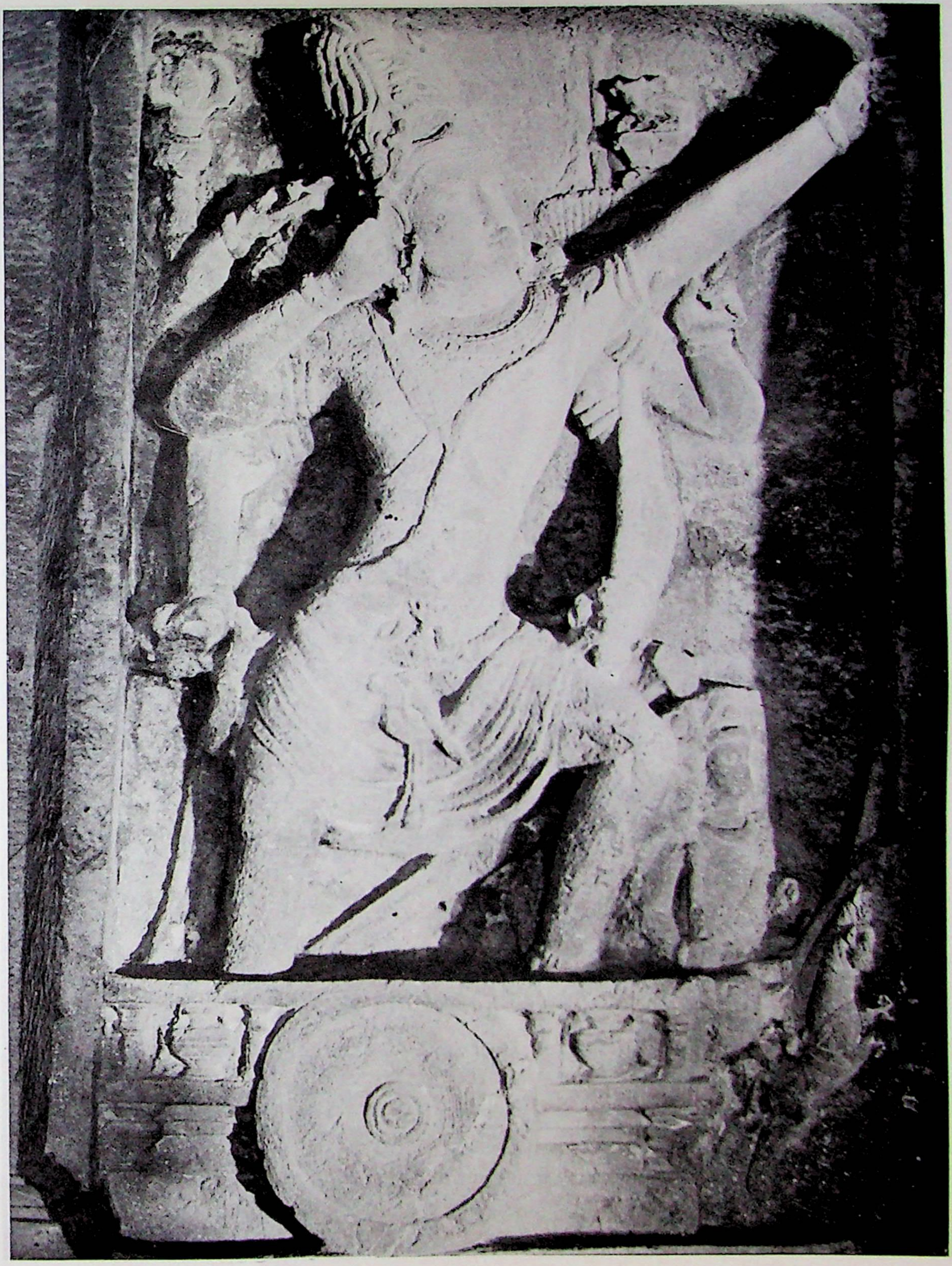
70. Siva and Parvati playing *chausar*, northern gallery.



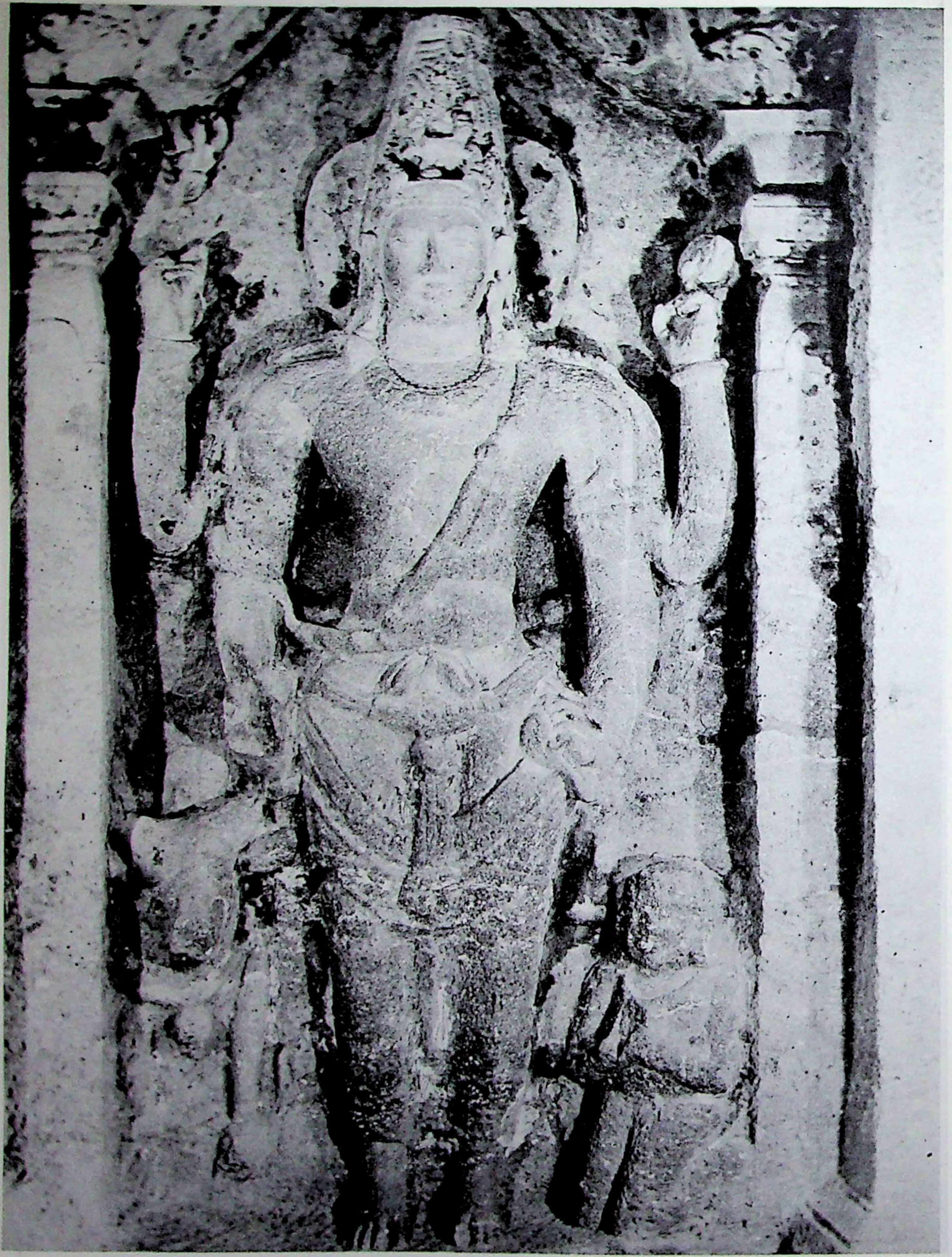
71. Siva protecting Markandeya, northern gallery.



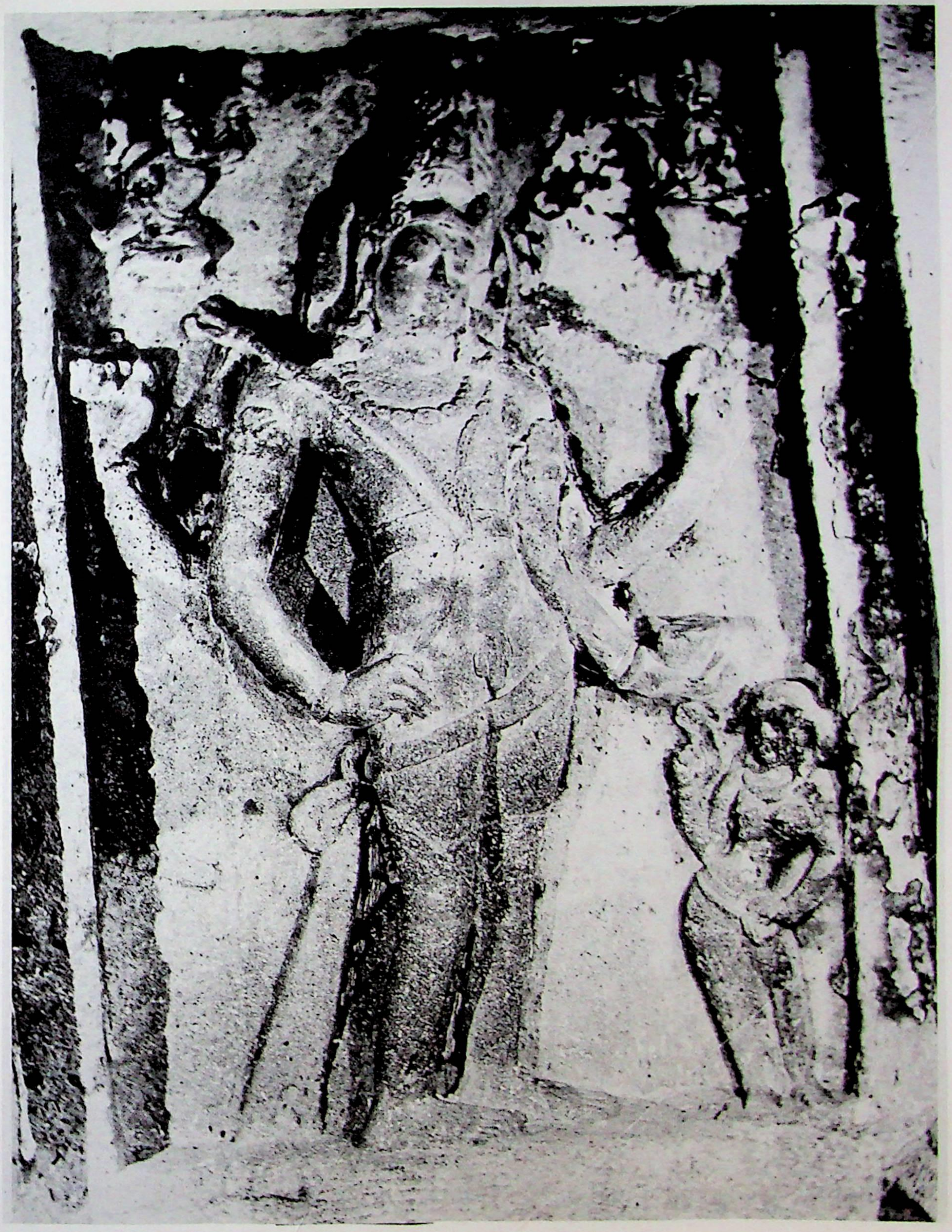
72. Marriage of Siva and Parvati, eastern gallery.



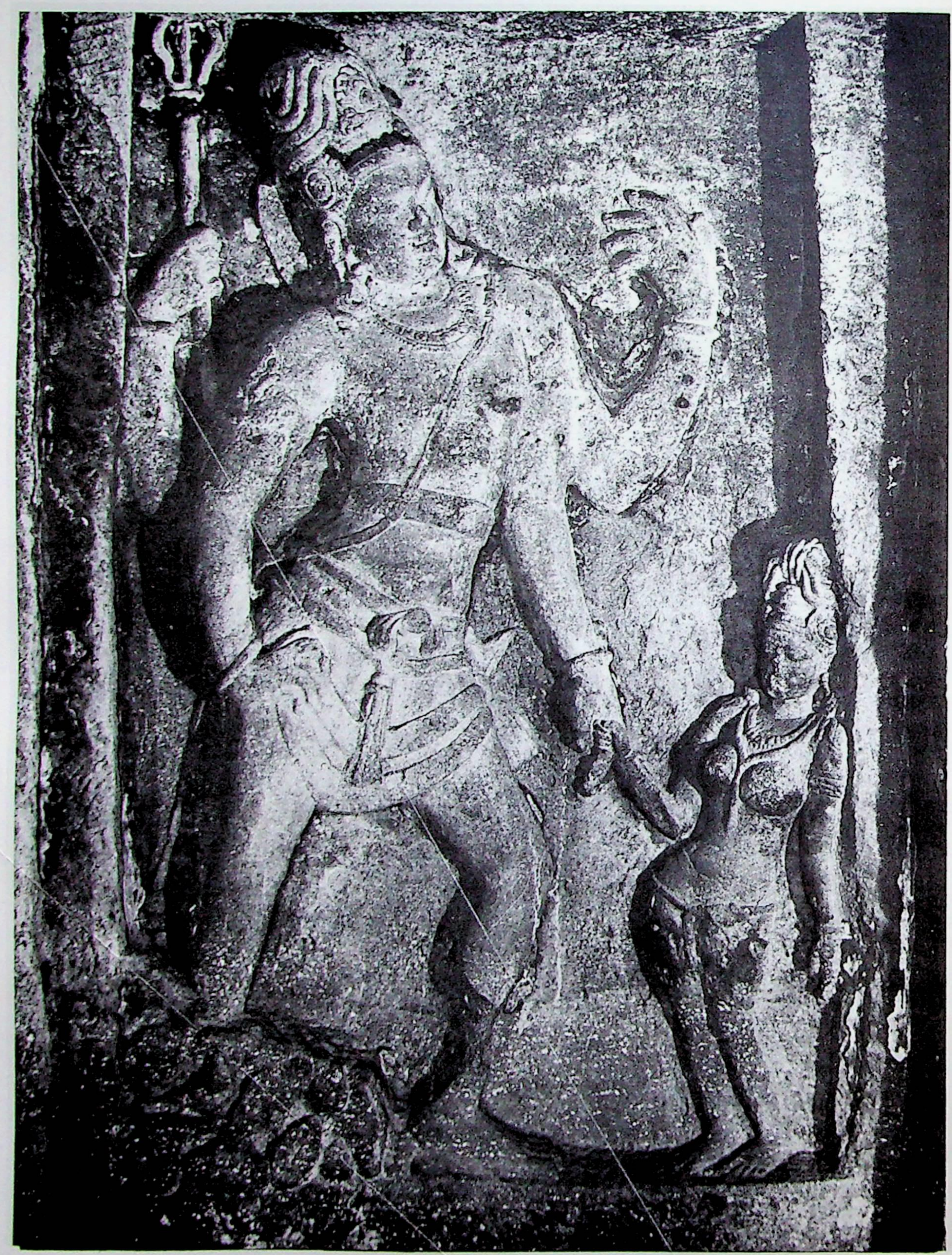
73. Tripurari Siva, eastern gallery.



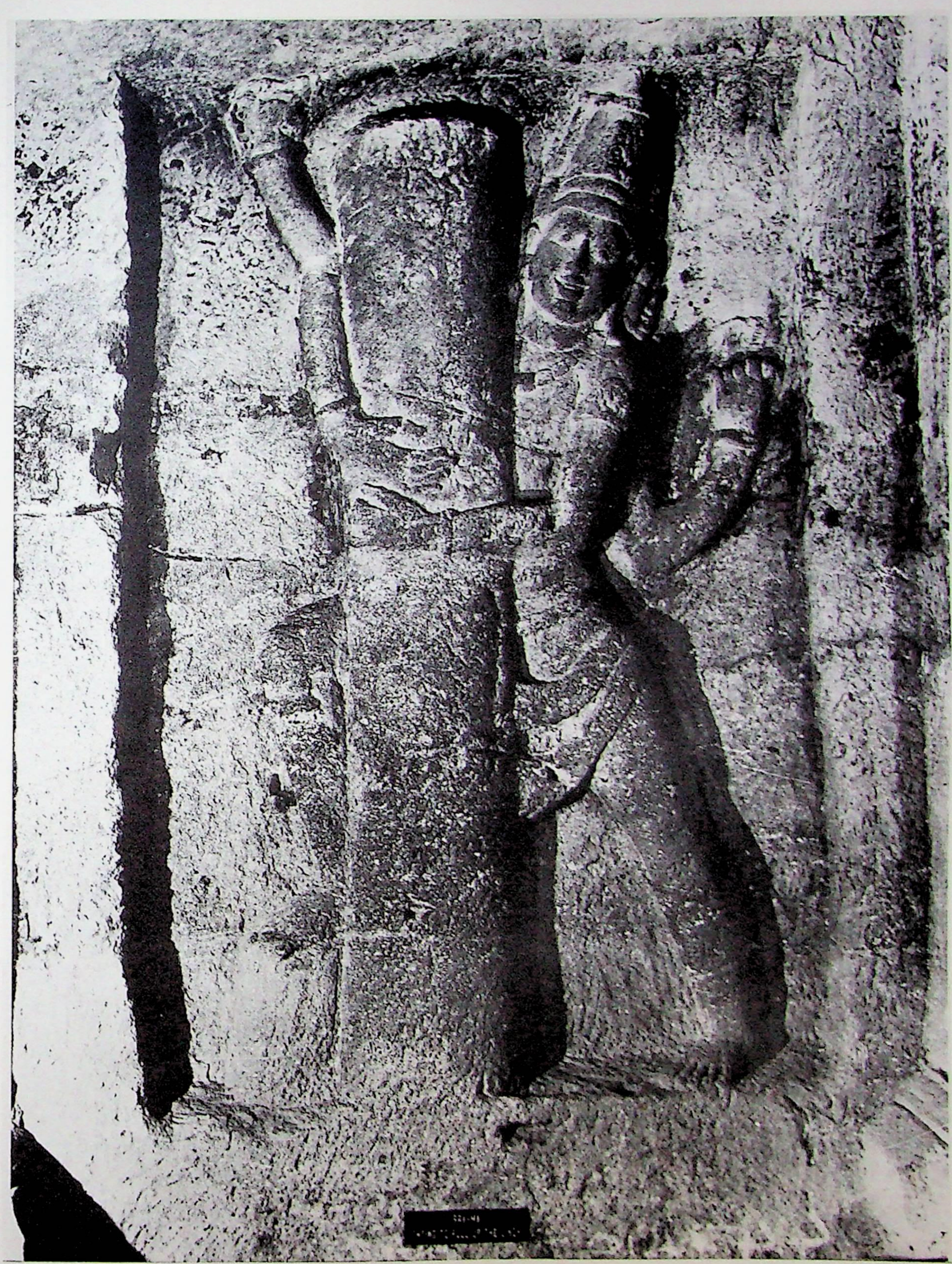
74. **Harihara, eastern gallery.**



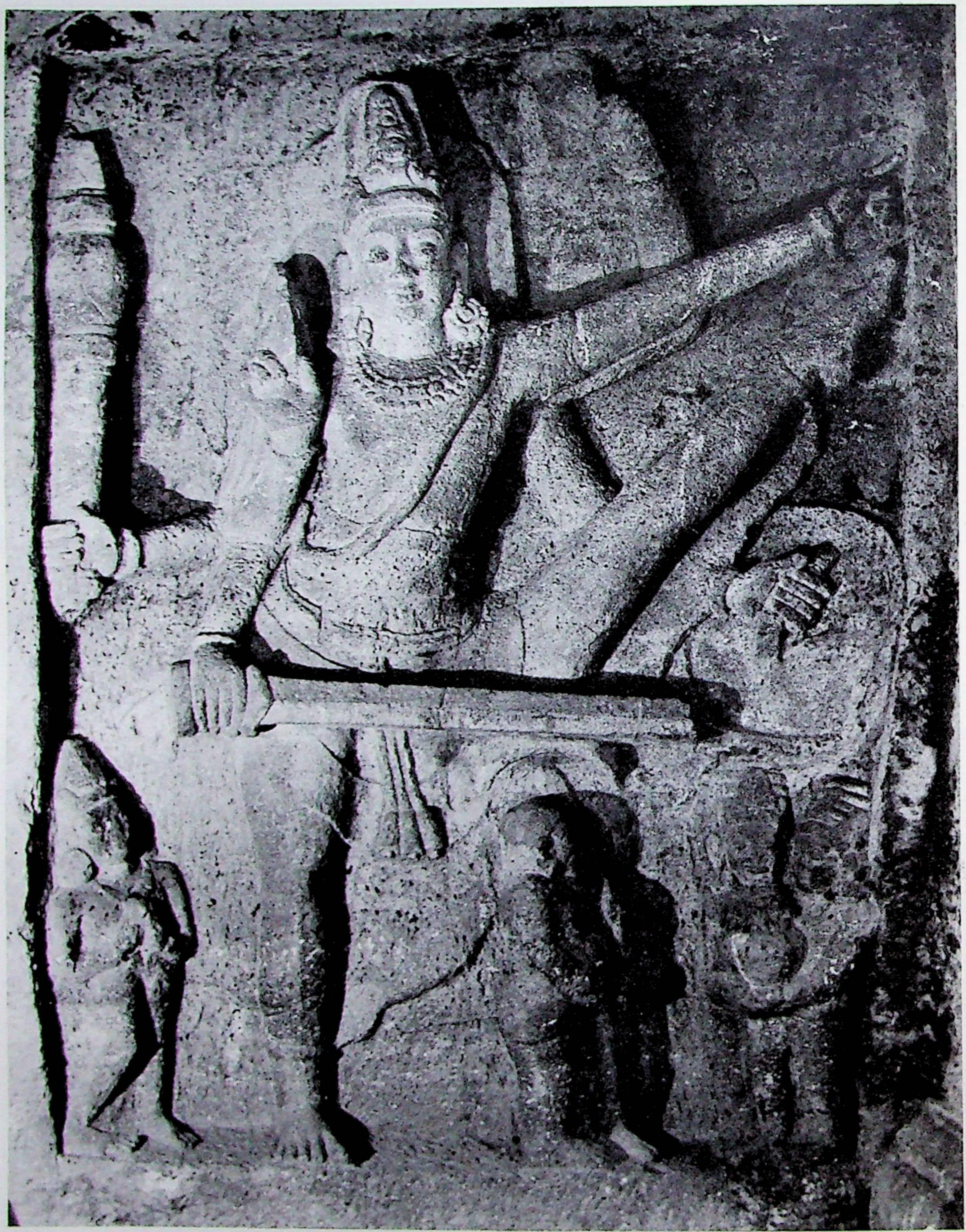
75. Bhikshatana-murti Siva, eastern gallery.



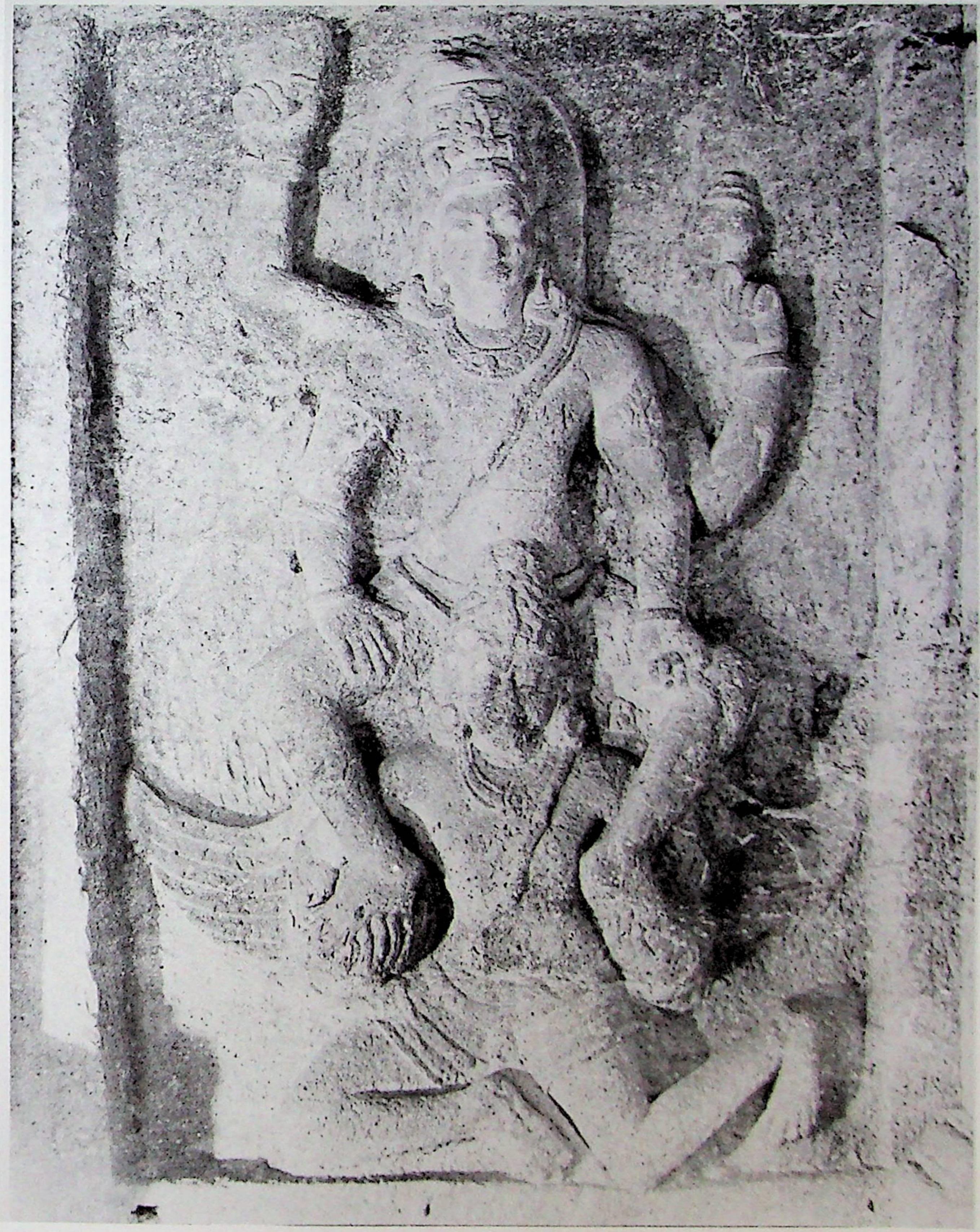
76. Siva testing Parvati, eastern gallery.



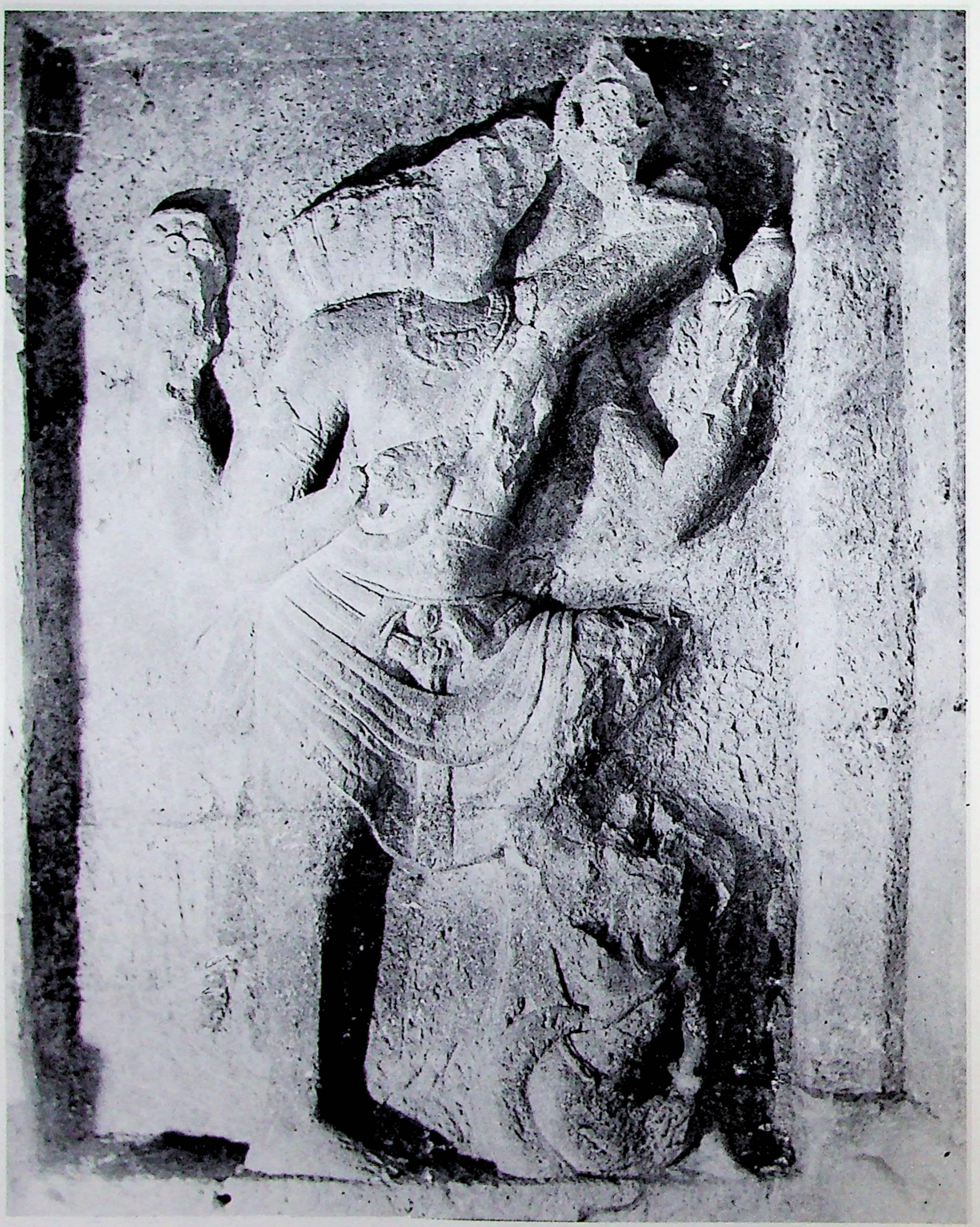
77. Brahma lifting *lingam*, eastern gallery.



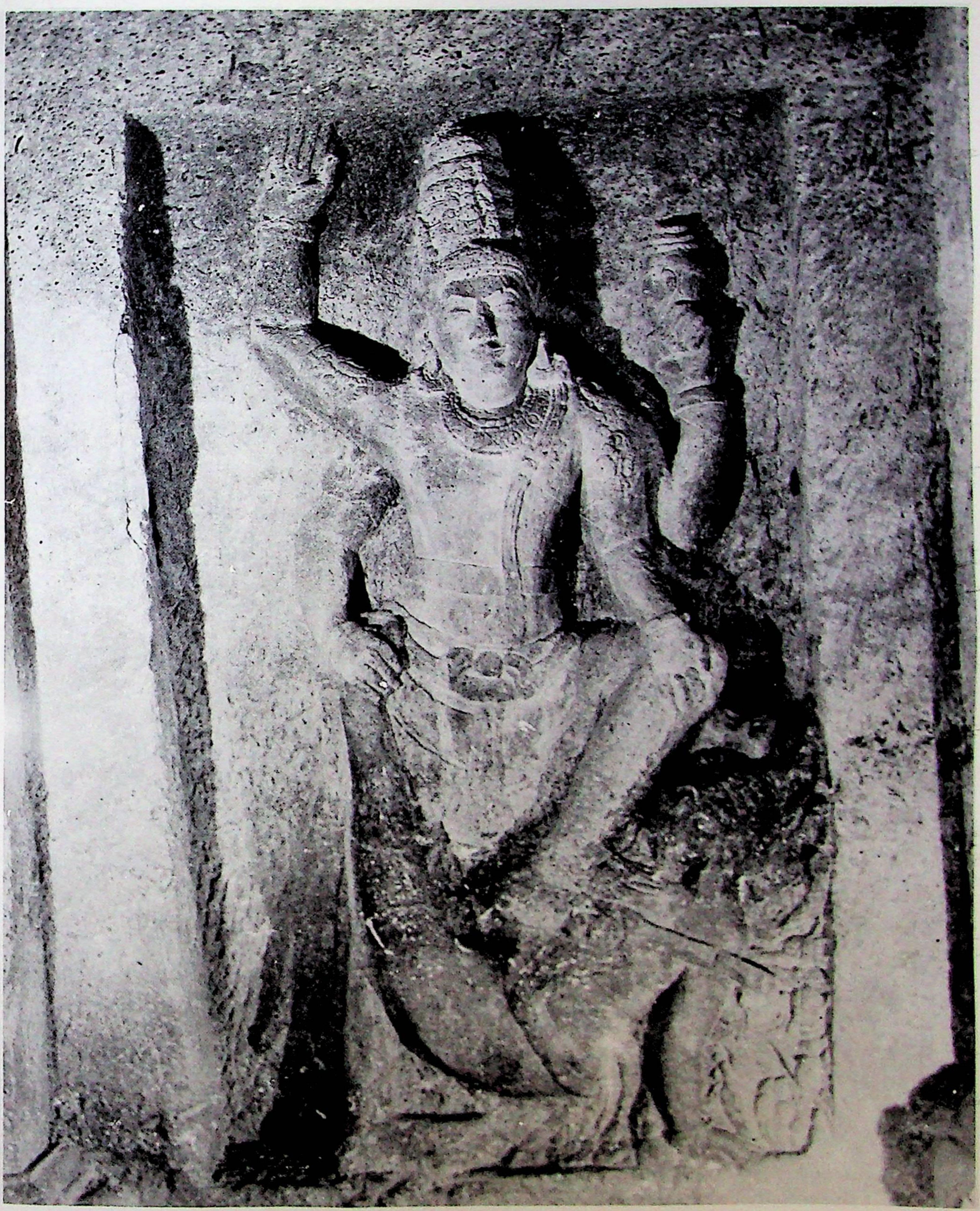
78. Trivikrama form of Vishnu.



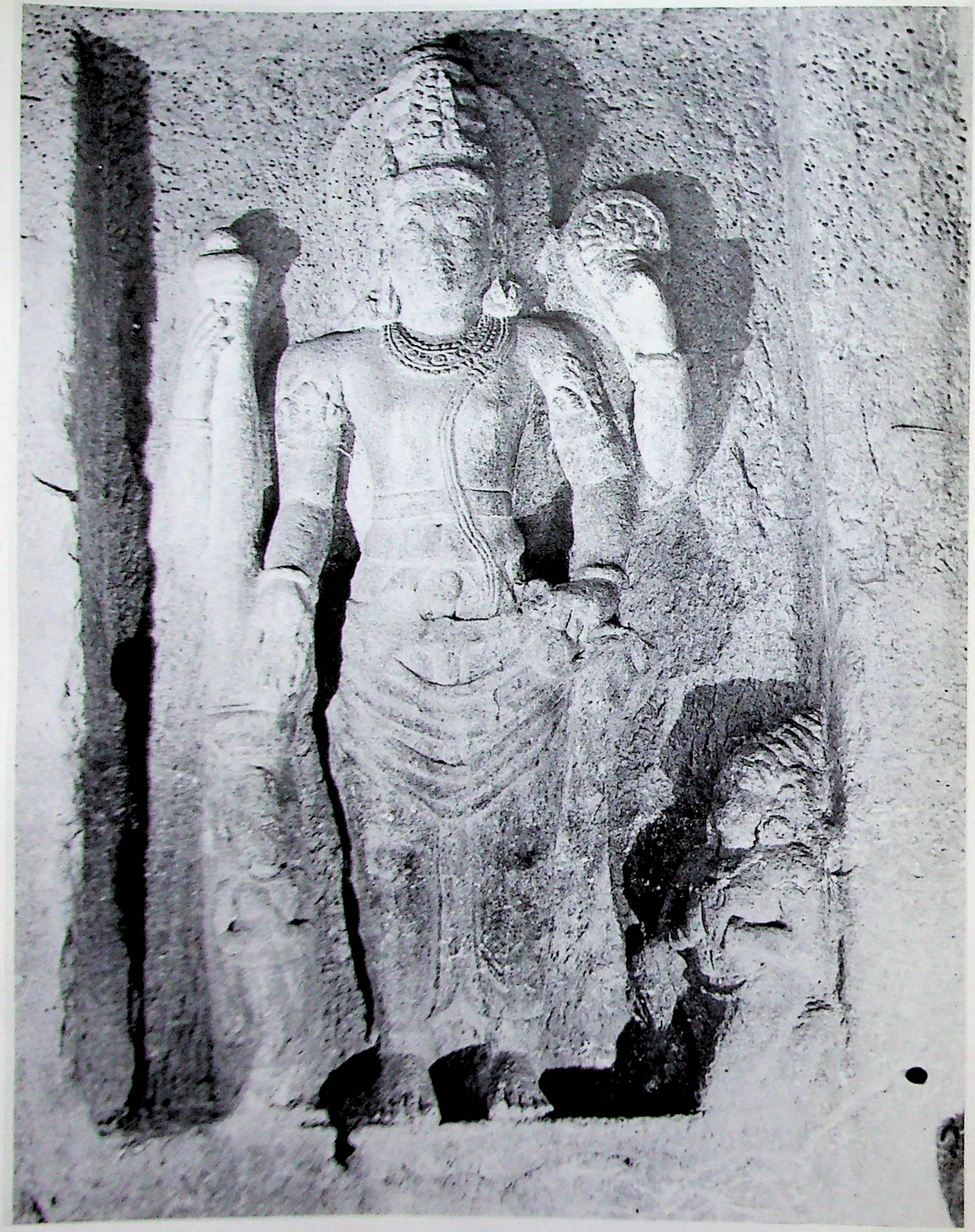
79. Vishnu on Garuda.



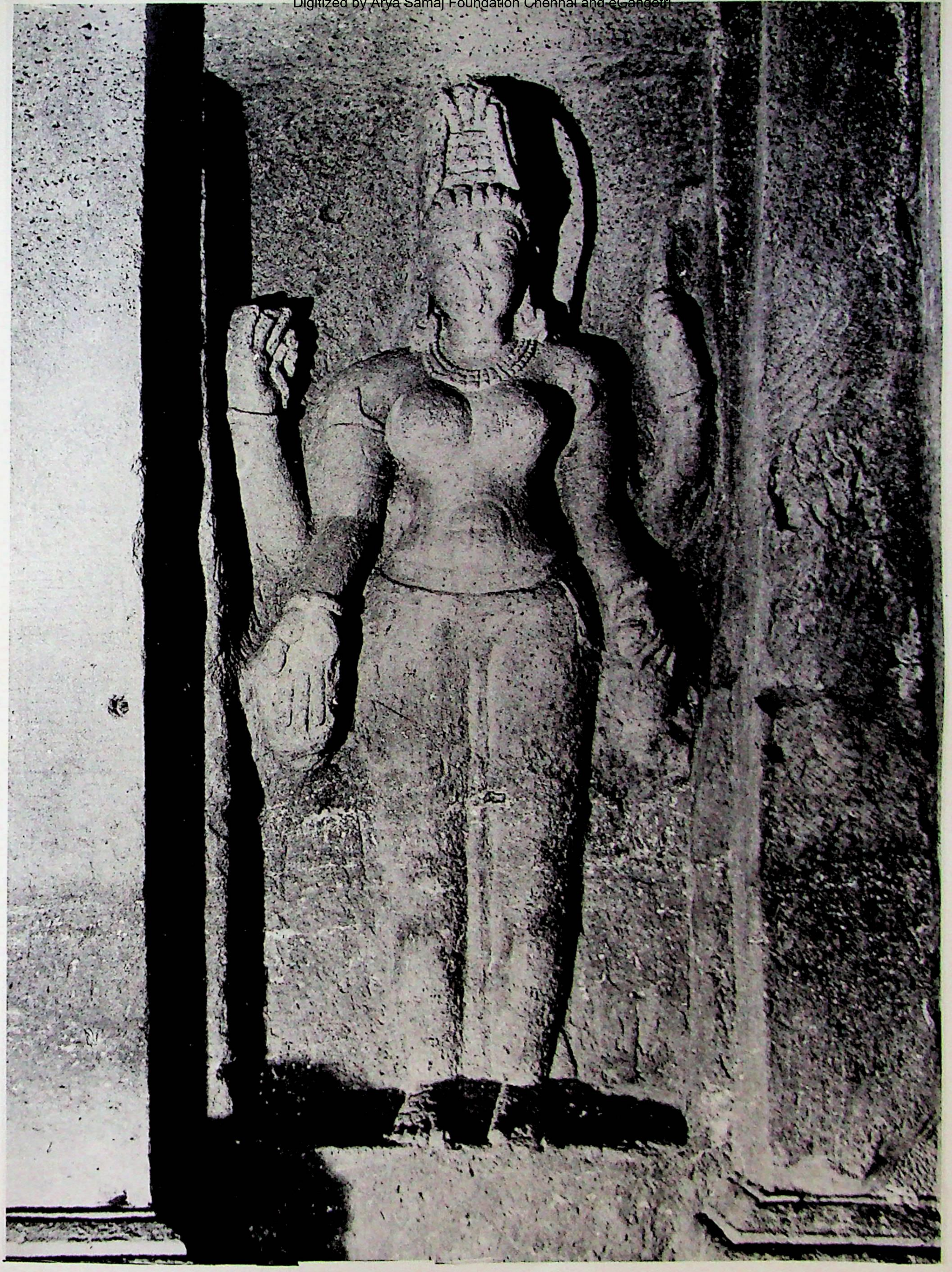
80. Boar (Varaha) incarnation of Vishnu.



81. Krishna subduing snake Kaliya, south gallery.



82. Vishnu, south gallery.



83. Annapurna, south gallery.

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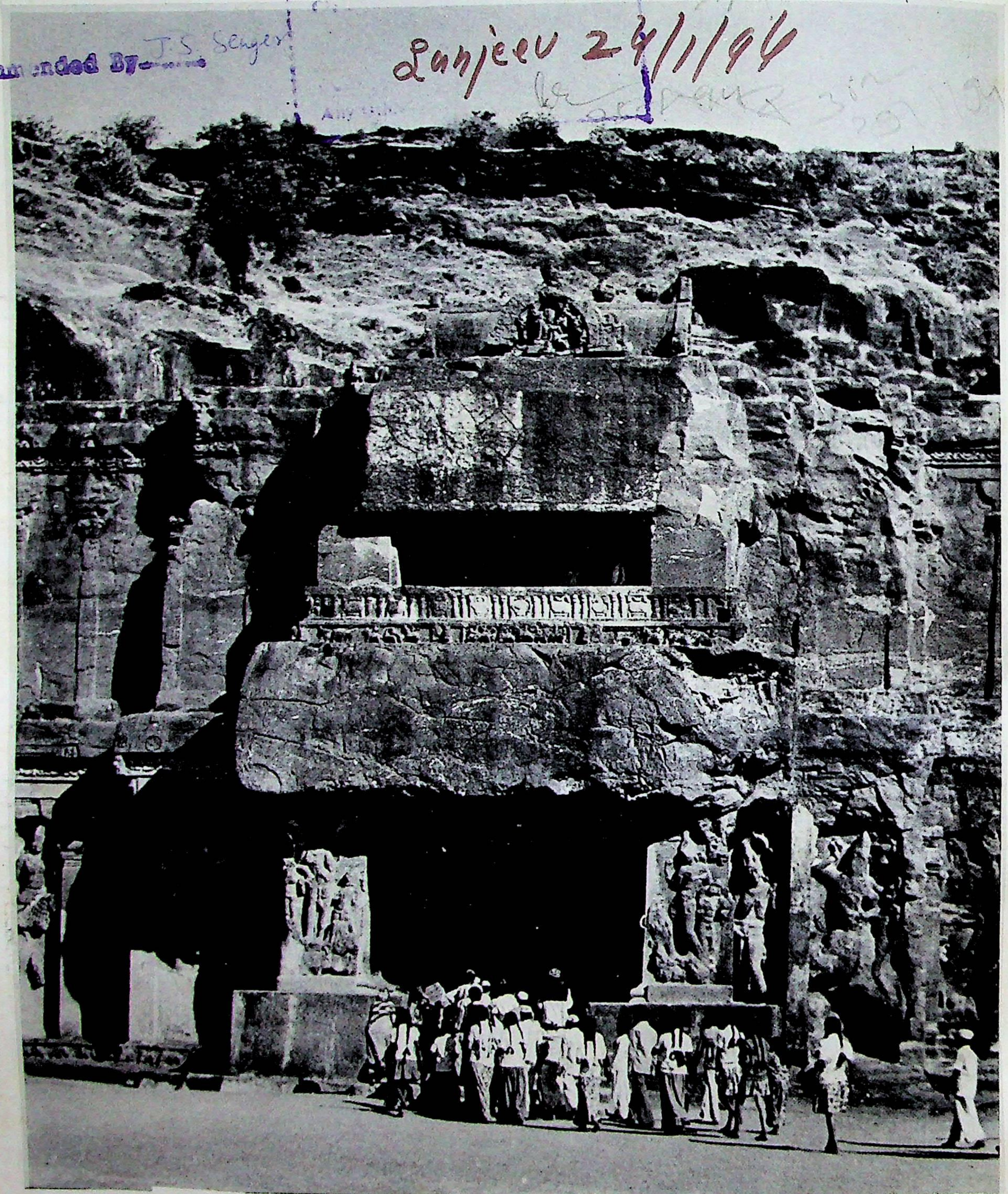
23.2.09

Sanjeev 24/1/94



84. Gopuram of the Kailas.

Gangotri

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1999-2000